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STEN KONOW AND POUL TUXEN

The RELIGIONS *of* INDIA

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I

INTRODUCTION AND PREHISTORY

by

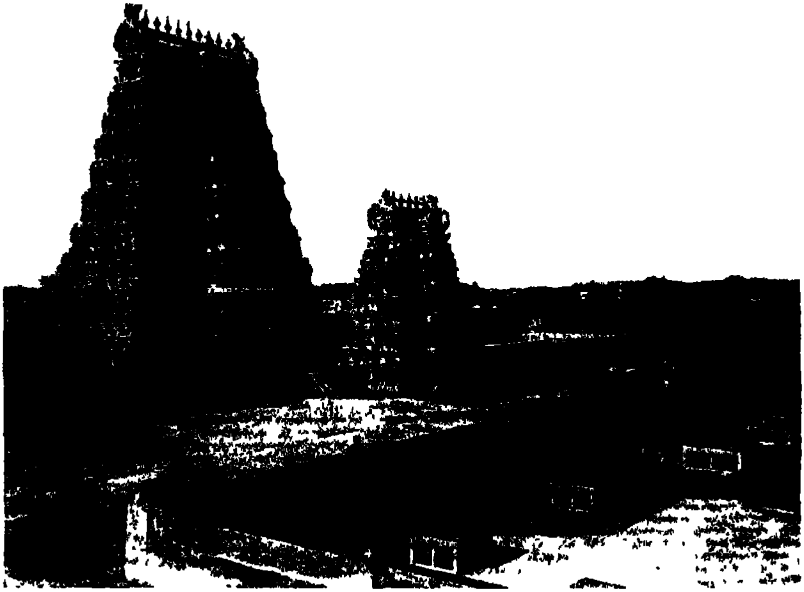
Sten Konow.

To the students of religion India would seem to be the ideal field of research. It is in a way a separate world, or rather a separate part of the world. If we leave out Russia, it is as large as the whole of Europe, with 1.670 000 square miles and about 400 million inhabitants And it is cut off from the remaining world by high mountains and the sea Towards the north the sky-high Himalaya is an effective barrier, with lofty mountain-ranges stretching down to the sea in the east and in the west.

Moreover its literature, which is to a great extent religious, carries us back to the second, or perhaps the third millennium B.C and has been continued down to our own time. Here therefore we might expect to find an indigenous religious development, independent of the outside world.

But such expectations will soon prove to be illusory. Even a short visit to India will show us that there is so much difference in the population and its religious practices that there can be no question about a common origin or an unbroken development. Some Indians are dark-skinned, almost like negroes, others are brown, yellow, or whitish; their noses may be narrow and pointed, or broad and thick; their skulls long or round.

In the reports of the last Census of India, taken in 1941, a learned Indian has distinguished between six different races, each with its separate features, and each with similarities to people outside India. The Indians are fond of systematizing, where we are more inclined to scepticism. But some results of such comparisons seem to be certain enough The Munda tribes in Central



The great temple at Madura

India are related to peoples in Further India and, according to some scholars, to the Malayo-Polynesian tribes; the Tibeto-Burmans to the Chinese and Siamese; the Iranian strata to the Persians, and the wide-spread Aryan element can, furthermore, be traced back to the distant period of Indo-European unity millenniums ago.

About India's primeval population we know next to nothing. But we know that foreign invaders have repeatedly entered the

country and left their traces The Indian population is like a great ocean with affluents from all parts of the world.

Consequently Indian religions cannot be expected to show any uniformity, and that is certainly not the case One Indian prostrates himself before a stone, or before the image of a snake; another practices asceticism or self-torture; a third sits in quiet contemplation, and a fourth looks as if all the world's happiness were his

Nevertheless we sometimes think that we can descry some common features. We have been accustomed to ascribe this to the oldest invaders we hear about, the Indo-Aryans, who entered India in the second millennium B C We thought that it was these Indo-European invaders who laid the foundation of India's civilization and became the people's leaders down through the ages The older inhabitants were believed to have been mere barbarians, but in the course of time they gradually became, to some extent, influenced by the conquerors' religion and culture And we believed that here we were face to face with a really Indo-European civilization, the only one history knows about.

The language of these old invaders furthermore became the common speech over great parts of the country, not only in the higher classes but also largely, split up into dialects, among the masses Only in Southern India the Dravidians stuck to, and even to-day stick to, their old tongues, which we have not been able to bring into relationship with any known linguistic family outside of India It was usually supposed that they belonged to the pre-Aryan population, and that they might have reached a somewhat higher stage than the other primitive tribes of pre-Aryan India

But when we spoke about India and her civilization we only thought of the Indo-European element Whenever new invaders came, they became Indianized, with an Aryan stamp.

A trait, which we seem to be able to follow down through the ages, is the conception of an original unity behind the multiplicity

of life and life's phenomena, and the old Indo-Aryans had a word for it. They called it *rita,* and their Iranian cousins had the same word in the form of *asha,* both meaning »truth«, what is really existing, *satya* In an old stanza we read »They say Indra, Mitra, Varuna, and they speak of the heavenly bird Fair-feather, they say Agni, Yama, Mâtariçvan (all old divine beings) the one real thing (*sat*) the seer's view in manifold ways« There cannot accordingly be any essential difference between gods and men. God has many faces (pratîkas), and eternal truth can meet us in a human being, who is then, so to say, God's mouth-piece

The last time I was in India, in 1925, a small Mahârâja, who ruled over about half a million subjects in Central India, asked me to come and visit him. When I arrived I discovered that he had conceived the idea that I could work wonders, and he wanted me to put him into communion with a deceased friend, to judge from a photograph, which will be reproduced below, a very handsome boy I soon understood that it had been a lad he had »loved«, and who had acted Krishna's rôle at the cultic plays at his court.

I told him that I could not, and that I would not have done it if I could. He seemed to be much astonished and asked me why. My answer was that I presumed that his friend was now above all mundane imperfections, and that any attempt at coming into touch with him might diminish his happiness and even do him harm.

He whispered something to his secretary, who went out and returned with a tray of roses, which His Highness began to throw over my head. I asked him what he was doing, and he answered »I worship you«. I said that I would accept this worship presuming that his reason was that he felt that he had heard from my mouth what struck him as divine truth. »So it is«, he said, and he wanted me to make a long stay. He would build a temple for me!

When one has personally had such an experience, one can easily understand the reverence, nay worship, which is still at the present day shown to the Mahâtma, »the high-souled«, such

as is the case with Gandhi It is this eternal truth and reality underlying the Universe, which the Yogin visualizes in trance, his vision is a picture which he acquires and possesses — picture and what is pictured are, after all, one and the same

This would seem to be a purely Indo-Aryan conception But it can also be due to a coalescence of different elements, also such as are prior to the arrival of the Indo Aryans The same thing may have happened to them as to later invaders they can have been impressed with the stamp of the country and the people they came to rule over

On the other hand, it is certain that Indian religious thinking and feeling have played a decisive rôle not only in India itself but also beyond her frontiers It is well known that they have had the same importance for large territories in Asia as Christianity has had in Europe From the Indian borderlands they have spread through Central Asia to the Far East and left lasting traces In culture and in religion India belongs to Asia

The discoveries of the last decenniums have further shown us that we were not right in wanting to trace the entire civilization and higher religious development in India back to the Aryan conquerors and looked upon the older inhabitants as uncivilized barbarians

The Indus Civilization

In 1922 the Indian scholar Rakhal Das Banerji from Bengal began to excavate a mound in the Larkhana district in Sind, between the Indus and an old branch of this river It was called Mohenjo Daro, and this name was, wrongly, considered to mean »Dead men's mound« On the top was a Buddhist structure, which seemed to belong to the first centuries A D , and to begin with there was nothing specially remarkable about the finds

As he dug downwards, however, they gradually became diffe-

rent. *Inter alia* he found several curious seals of a kind which had long ago been recovered at Harappa in the Panjab, at an old bed of the river Ravi, inscribed with signs which looked like letters These had been eagerly studied by eminent epigraphists, but without success. It was then a likely assumption that we had come across

Staircase Mohenjo Daro

remnants of an old forgotten civilization, which had once flourished in Sind and in Panjab Other sites of the same kind have since been found or discovered by photographing from the air, and we now know that we have to do with an extensive territory, which towards East reaches at least to the Ganges, and in the West through Afghanistan and Balochistan towards the Persian Gulf.

It has been spoken of as the Indus Civilization, because it was the finds in Sind which first opened our eyes to its existence, but most scholars are inclined to think that it formed part of a culture extending over a great part of the whole ancient world, from China in the East perhaps to Egypt in the West

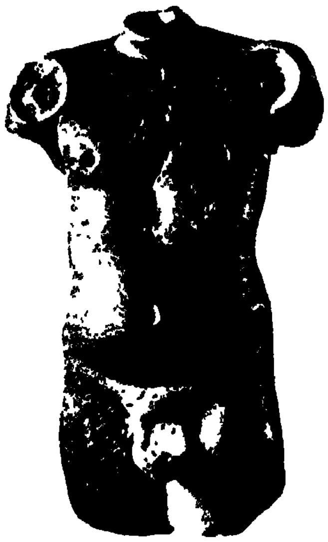
It has also been thought possible to arrive at an approximate dating Antiquities which have evidently been transferred from the Indus territory have been found in Mesopotamia in strata from ca 2800 B C , and the prevailing opinion is now that we may have to go back to about 3000 B C or even earlier And this old civilization was much superior to that of the old Aryan invaders of India, and much older

In some places we seem to be able to trace a deterioration, and then the old civilization disappears It has been supposed that this may have been a consequence of the Aryan invasion, and a saying of an eminent German scholar has been quoted in this connection, that the much-admired old songs of the Indo-Aryans are barbarian hymns to barbarian gods

It has already been indicated above that some curious signs have been found on several seals and antiquities, they are far too numerous to allow us to think of an alphabet, but they might be a kind of hieroglyphs or pictographs Some scholars have thought they can trace similar signs on prehistoric Chinese antiquities and also, even in quite modern times, on the Easter Island It has also been attempted to derive some of the letters of the oldest known Indian alphabet from this source But it has not been possible to get further than to more or less unlikely guesses

The discovery of this highly developed pre-Aryan civilization has raised new problems for the student of Indian culture and Indian religions One of the first inferences we must draw is that Indian applied art, which plays such a great rôle in the decoration of religious buildings, is largely indebted to it Among the Aryan Indians this art does not seem to have been the concern of the upper classes But in the Indus Civilization it was highly devel-

oped. One find, a headless statuette, shows an artistic feeling and technique which seem to be inexplicable at such an early time; but Sir John Marshall states that it was found in such circumstances that it cannot have come down subsequently from higher strata. It is made from a fine red stone, which must have been imported from outside, but we cannot say whence. Nothing of the same kind has come to light in the Indo-Hellenic or any other Indian school. The

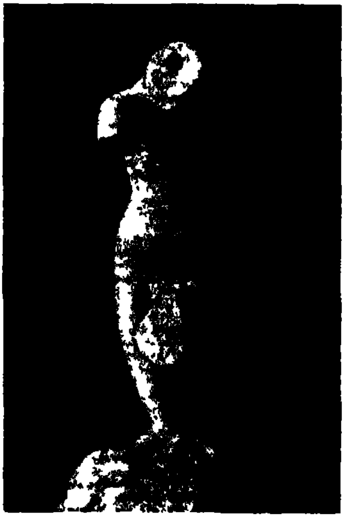


Torso from Mohenjo Daro

round belly reminds us of the Parkham statue in the Mathura Museum. We seem to be justified to think that much of the best products of Indian sculpture has its roots in the Indus Civilization. Another statuette, found in similar circumstances, is made of dark grey schist and represents a dancer, standing on his right leg, with the body turned to the left and the left leg raised. There seems

to have been three heads, and Sir John is probably right in thinking of a prototype of the dancing Çiva, Çiva Natesan. And we also remember Kâlidâsa's invocation, Kumârasambhava II, 3, of Brahmâ trimûrti, the three-shaped god Brahmâ, who was one before creation, but subsequently split himself up for the development of the three *gunas*, qualities

Without any doubt we are on religious ground in the case of some primitive images On a seal we have a god who has been



Dancing figure Mohenjo Daro

Horned deity Mohenjo Daro

compared with a male figure on the Gundestrup vessel. He sits on his haunches on a throne On one side of him an elephant and a tiger are standing, on the other a buffalo and a rhinoceros. Below the throne are two deers or harts. The god wears armrings and a high cap. We at once think of certain representations of Çiva, Kâlî's wild consort, but also of images of the Buddha, and we are no doubt justified, in both cases, to assume a continuation of a type from the Indus Civilization.

Then we have several examples of a female deity, with a high head-dress and often richly decorated. The breasts are clearly marked, so that the sex is certain. Scholars have, no doubt with right, thought of the Great Mother, who plays such a prominent rôle in so many religions She it is, no doubt, also who reappears

The Great Mother Mohenjo Daro

as Çiva's consort, the deity with the many names, the valiant slayer of demons, but also the beloved mother, whom the Bengalis invoke in their national hymn Bande Mâtaram »I greet our Mother«.

Beautiful they are not, these gods, but bearers of irresistible power, vitality and fertility, death and annihilation. The symbol

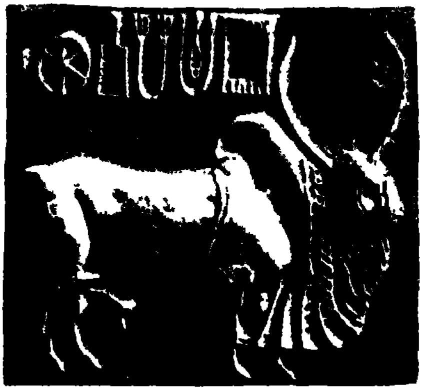
which we know so well from India, the male and the female member, linga and yoni, respectively, are frequently met with in the Indus Civilization, as they still are at the present day. The Indo-Aryans had had the same fate as other invaders: They became Indianized.

It is only at a later date that we find more goodlooking gods, after the ideal of human beauty had exercised its influence. As the Indians say: »What food man takes, that food his gods take«, i. e. man creates his gods in his own image, because it is one and the same eternal reality which underlies man and gods

And yet, there is a difference Not so much because the gods

Linga from Mohenjo Daro

have a longer span of life, for they are not individually eternal, their exalted position is at an end when their stock of religious merit is exhausted; but men are after all what the Romans called *homines*, »earth-beings«, while *deva*, the Sanskrit word for »god«, is derived from the root *div*, which denote »light« and »heaven«. They are not limited to one locality, as is often the case with Semitic gods, but they soar through space, and high pillars are raised for them to rest on. And they do not touch the earth when they seem to be walking along. Therefore Damayantī was able to distinguish them from Nala, when they appeared, in his likeness, and presented themselves as suitors.



Humped bull Mohenjo Daro

Just as in modern times, it was not only anthropomorphic deities who were worshipped. In many, often very fine, representations, we see the Indian humped bull (*Bos indicus*) We are reminded of the Brâhmanî bull, which is sacred to Çiva and wanders about as it likes and eats what it wants, as we read in Kipling's Kim

Common is also an apparently one-horned bull standing before something which looks like a censer, and we are irresistibly led

Bull before censer Mohenjo Daro

to think of some kind of worship. We have representations of elephants, bears, fowls, rhinoceroses, tigers, etc It is here also tempting to think of the animal mounts of various gods in Indian religion.

Once we see a horned deity with long hair and arm-rings, standing between two branches of a tree, before which is a half-kneeling woman. We evidently have to do with a tree deity, apparently residing in a Pipal (*Ficus religiosa*), a tree which is viewed with reverence in India. It was under a Pipal that the Buddha had his revelation.

Also water seems to have religious significance. Bathrooms have

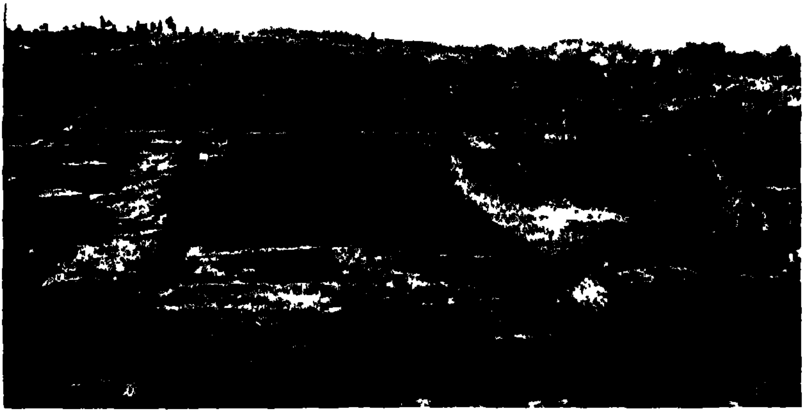
Tree deity Mohenjo Daro

been found in private houses, and a big bathing establishment has been dug out, which may have been used for sacral lustrations. We remember the ceremonial bathing in sacred wells and rivers in Modern India But nothing has hitherto been found which leads us to think of such, *e g* of the holy Ganges, in the Indus Civilization, if we leave out some pictures which seem to represent Nâgas.

On the whole there is so much that reminds us of religious features and conceptions in India at the present day, that the connection cannot be doubted But we are of course mainly reduced to guesses, which can only be considered as provisional.

No structure has been excavated which can, with any certainty,

or even probability, be considered to have been a temple, though some of them may also have had their use in worship. In one of them were found several ring stones, which have been supposed to have had something to do with the cult. One big hall with twenty brick-pillars bears some resemblance to Buddhist establishments and basilicas, and reminds us of the problems connected



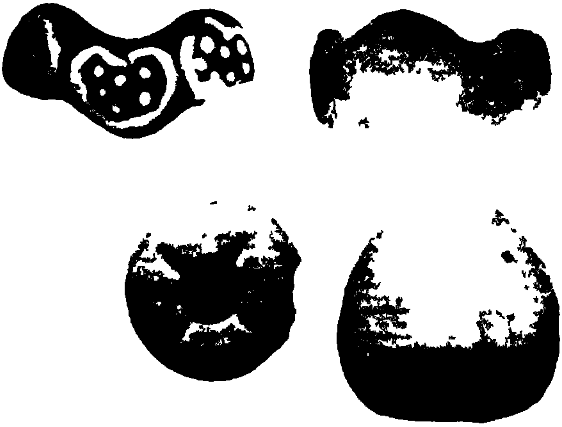
Great bath Mohenjo Daro

with them but they may have been intended for ordinary or festival gatherings, and it is worthy of notice that no representations or symbols of *deities* have been found in them

The old Indo-Aryans had, in the same way, no temples. The gods were worshipped in the open air, or in the house of the worshipper, and real temples have only been found at a later date. And then it is possible to think of foreign, presumably Semitic, influence or, again, of the old Indian saying that man creates his gods in his own image. The kings were called *deva*, »god«, and

the gods were kings When the kings got their palaces the gods would get *theirs, viz* the temples

The oldest religious buildings discovered in India are much later than, and have nothing to do with, the Vedic period They are due to the Buddhists, and none of them is older than the fifth, or the third, century B C From excavations at Pataliputra, the capital of the Magadha empire, the present Patna on the Ganges, from the imitation of wooden roofs in ancient cave temp-



Ringstones Mohenjo Daro

les, and other sources, we know that wood was largely used as building material, but wood is perishable And we have, moreover, no reason for assuming the existence of very old wodden temples in the country

When the Indians began to build temples the architectural technique of the Indus Civilization made its influence felt We can infer this already from the use of bricks in the plinth, for the making of bricks the Indians learnt from the older inhabitants

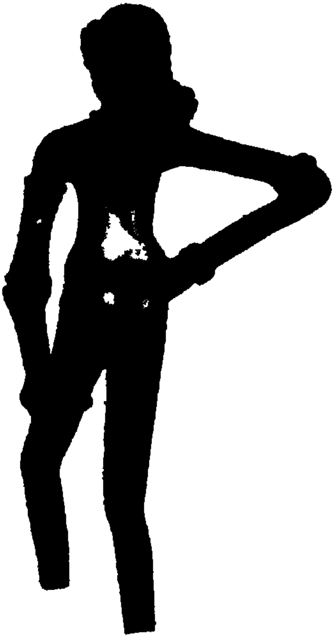
About the cult and the racial affinities of the people of the Indus Civilization we know next to nothing We have already seen what we may infer with regard to their religious conceptions, and

as to their possible connection with other ancient peoples. It is tempting to think of the Sumerians, whose name reminds us of the Sauvîras and Sindhusauvîras known from fairly old sources

Svastika Mohenjo Daro

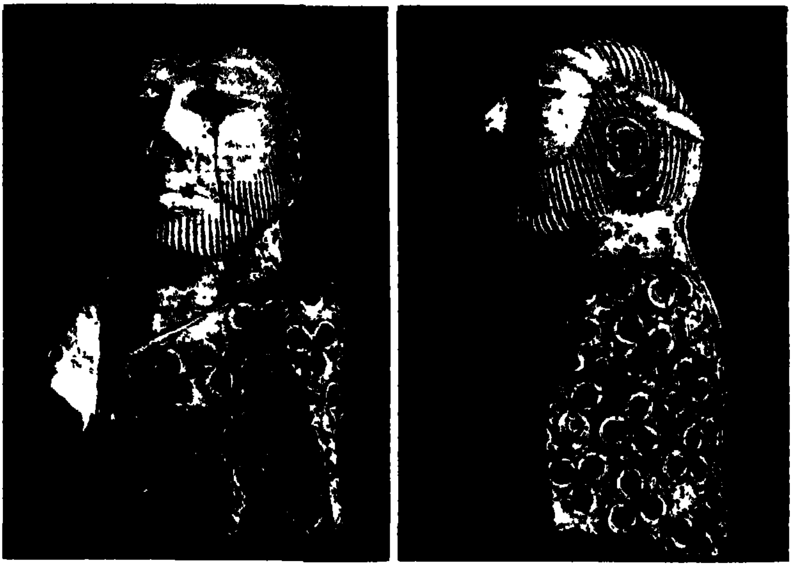
as inhabitants of the lower Indus country, but influences drawn from similarity in designation are usually doubtful

To the left of what we interpreted as a tree deity, we see a man and a woman She is raising her hands in adoration, or perhaps ra-



Dancing girl Mohenjo Daro

ther imploration, while he carries a sickle-shaped knife in his hand. The scene has been interpreted as pointing to human sacrifices; but the interpretation is, of course, uncertain Such sacrifices are not, however, unknown in later times, as we shall see below in connection with Hinduism. The *Svastika*, which is found represented as turning both to the right and to the left, has probably some religious significance and is certainly pre-Aryan.



Yogin or priest king Mohenjo Daro

We should also take note of a small bronze statuette with its arms quite covered with bracelets, the right one is bent towards the hip and the left supported on the knee. It is possibly an ancient nautch girl who has been dancing in worship of the Great Mother.

We have also a small statuette of *steatite*, with a stylized dress of a trefoil pattern, its eyes directed towards the tip of the nose According to the Bhagavadgîtâ such was the attitude of the Yogin

in trance and self-concentration, but some scholars have also thought of an old priest, perhaps the king-priest.

Several skeletons with trinkets have been found at Mohenjo Daro, sometimes also mere fragments of bones, together with broken clay-objects, pearls, arrows of flint and ivory, a spoon of shell, etc. One might think of the later cult of relics.

But everywhere we are on unsafe ground, and we can only hope that future finds will throw light on what is yet uncertain

II

BRAHMANISM, JAINISM AND BUDDHISM

by

Poul Tuxen.

The oldest Vedic period

Three grandiose cultural monuments mark as many great periods in the religious life of India: the ruins of the Indus Civilization, the hymns collected in the Rigveda, and the huge heroic epos Mahâbhârata.

The first one gives us information about many highly interesting features in India's culture and religious conceptions three thousand years B.C., the hymns collected in the Rigveda are an almost inexhaustible source of information about the life, the mentality and the religion of the old Indo-Aryan hordes who invaded India in the second millennium B.C., and the Mahâbhârata is an invaluable source of knowledge about the further development, where not only the old Indo-Aryan peoples but also other racial and social strata made their contributions.

Now it strikes us as rather curious that, while we find many features and conceptions which we have learnt to know in the Indus Civilization preserved down to our own time, the culture which we are brought face to face with in the Rigveda not rarely impresses us as a foreign element in this connection.

Nevertheless, the culture of the Rigveda as it was developed by foreign invaders, became the dominating factor during the coming

centuries In spite of the revolutionizing discovery of the Indus Civilization, we may still maintain the old opinion that the Rig veda forms the basis of Indian culture and Indian religion as we can, to some degree, follow it during three to four millenniums But we must bear in mind that many accretious conceptions in the course of time were introduced, which were not only due to the ancient Indo Aryans, but also to the pre Aryan population

Modern representatives of old Vedic lor

It is not easy to see clearly how we should define the relationship between the pre-Aryan population and the Aryan tribes, who invaded India in the times of the Rigveda, but the contrast be tween them is obvious

The Indus Civilization sketched above appears to us as belong ing to a typical urban society, with a numerous population, living in solid brickhouses, with sewage, bath rooms, even a big, appa rently public, bathing establishment, deep well-constructed wells,

etc. The population comprised thrifty traders, but they were also engaged in agriculture. Such is the picture the excavations show us. The people of the Rigveda led an existence half as herdsmen and half as agriculturists, their settlements were villages, sometimes with fortifications or strongholds, but we cannot find certain traces of organized urban life The Indus Civilization knew metals such as silver and gold, wrought utensils of stone, copper and bronze, but it did not use iron The Rigveda knows gold, copper and bronze, and apparently also iron, but not silver Bows, arrows, spears and knives are found in both societies, but only the Rigveda knows the use of helmets and armour, and only the Indus Civilization such a weapon as the mace With regard to food we see that the Indus people were fond of fish, but also tortoises, crocodiles, meat and fowls were eaten The Rigveda people favoured meat and does not know anything about fishing The Indus people did not know the horse — this animal which was so important in warfare — and did not apparently give any preference to the cow, but had pictures of bulls, tigers, elephants and rhinoceroses In the Rigveda both the horse and the cow play a great rôle but we do not read about the tiger, and an animal, which is so inseparably connected with our conception of India as the elephant, is only mentioned twice It is of course necessary to be careful in drawing inferences from negative evidence, but it can hardly be doubted that the Rigveda gives a fairly comprehensive picture of the people whose sacred hymns it contains

We must, finally, turn to the religious conceptions dealt with in the preceding chapter We can no doubt make the statement that neither the Indus Civilization nor the Rigveda had temples, but also here the difference between the two societies is very evident The numerous representations of gods, the rôle played by the Mother Deity, the absence of a fire altar, the frequent occurrence of the *linga* (phallos) show the most striking contrast to the Rigveda, which does not know images of the gods, where goddesses play a quite subordinate rôle, where Fire is the chief receiver of the

sacrifices, and which condemns the worship of the *linga* And it is just in such details that the parallelism with Hinduism (in the wider sense of this word) is so evident The same remark is valid with regard to stone- and tree-worship, horns as a sign of divine nature, Nâgas (serpent demons), Yoga-attitudes, the tiger as the mount of a goddess, elephant, buffalo, ox, crocodile, monkey, etc, as sacred animals

But what shall we think about the historical relationship between the Indus and the Rigvedic Civilization? It is very difficult to give a convincing answer On one side we have the ancient town-civilization which must have been entirely destroyed some time in the second millennium B C on the other the Aryan tribes immigrating from the North-West, who, in one or more waves, overflowed first the Panjab and later on the eastern and southern parts of the country Now it would seem to be quite apparant that it must have been these Indo-European tribes, immigrating in the second millennium B C or earlier, who in warlike freshness laid waste the almost two thousand years old Indus Civilization These tribes, on whom the inhabitants of the town societies of the Indus district must have looked down as on barbarians, may have let their cattle graze in the hill districts, and from time to time sought access to pasture grounds in India Gradually, as the old society s power of resistance decreased, they got a firm footing on Indian territory and gave the death-blow to the Indus Civilization

Such an assumption is *a priori* not unlikely, and, chronologically, quite possible But there is one serious objection which it is diffi cult to dismiss

These "barbarians from the North-West brought with them a rich treasure of hymns and cult songs, which was continually enlarged with new additions This collection is just the Rigveda, and it not only gives us a fairly comprehensive picture of the religious life and the culture, but it mentions also historical events, *e g* the fights among various strata in the population, yet nowhere with adversaries who have the least similarity with the bea-

rers of the Indus Civilization The highly developed culture of the latter, with the populous towns and the flourishing civic life, ought to have made an overwhelming impression on the invading warriors It is thus very difficult to understand why the meeting with those pre Aryan peoples has not left any trace in the literature of the Aryan Indians The historical relationship between the older and the younger civilizations must therefore be reckoned among the unsolved riddles which are so numerous in Indian history

Rigveda, the collection of hymns which I have mentioned more than once above, is the earliest known literary document, not only of any Indo-European people but also af India

The word *Veda* means knowledge, sacred knowledge The Indians reckon three, or, later, four, collections of sacred texts (1) *Rigveda*, the Veda of stanzas, with 1028 hymns and invocations of gods, composed under the inspiration of cult phenomena, in an older form of the Sanskrit language, and often bearing witness to an astonishing poetical genius or schooling, with the application of a refined aesthetic art, (2) *Sâmaveda* the Veda of songs or tunes, containing hymns from the Rigveda, with indication of their musical structure, (3) *Yajurveda*, the Veda of sacrificial formulas (yajus), etc , (4) *Atharvaveda*, which was only later on acknowledged as sacred knowledge, contains, beside a series of often beautiful and profound hymns to the gods, mostly incantations and invocations for protection against disease, evil spirits, rivals in love, etc

This extensive literature was handed down by oral tradition in the different schools from teacher to pupil, and even at the present day we find brahmans who know a whole text of a Veda by heart It cannot be doubted that a great part of this large literature has come into being without the use of writing On the other hand it seems incredible to me that it should have been possible to accomplish the *collection* and *arrangement* of the various bodies of text without the help of writing Nevertheless, at the time, when the use of writing had become fully developed and common, the

transmitted written Vedas were, and often still are, less estimated. It is therefore probable that it was the oral traditions which, right down from the very composition of the texts, were most highly valued, and that we therefore hear so little of written records in the oldest period. We must also bear in mind that the disciples in the priest-schools learnt what they should make use of at the great sacrifices where the oral enunciation held the ground alone; and how important the correct and faultless recitation of the sacred words was, will be understood when we read that a single fault in pronunciation or accentuation might render the sacrifice useless or even straightway harmful to him who had it performed. And therefore we find this unique reliability of the oldest and most important collection of hymns, the Rigveda, and here it cannot be doubted that the tradition and application was oral.

But that does not prove anything with regard to the use of writing in drawing up, and especially in collecting and arranging, the vast material; it was clearly indispensable in this connection And if this is not in accord with the current theories about the introduction of writing into India, these theories must be wrong.

That a kind of writing or denoting by means of signs was known in India, three thousand years B C in the Indus country, has been mentioned above But it is more than doubtful that this has anything to do with any writing that might possibly have been used in Vedic times

That learning by rote can very well be practised in spite of the possession of written or printed texts, is well known to everybody who has paid a visit to an Indian school of learning in our time, where grammars, dictionaries, philosophical texts, law books, etc , are learnt by rote by the students, irrespective of the available editions.

To the Vedas the Indians reckon, besides the four collections of hymns and formulas mentioned above, the huge collection of texts which are called *Brâhmanas* Their aim is to explain and interpret the significance of the individual sacrifical act. The four Samhitâs

gradually came to be considered as handbooks for all kinds of priests functioning at the sacrifice The *hotar* summoned the gods through reciting the Rigveda, the *Udgâtar* sung or intonated the Sâmaveda under the preparation of the sacrifice; the *Adhvaryu* accompanied the execution of the sacrifice by murmuring the formulas of the Yajurveda, and the supervising *Brahman* made use of stanzas from the Atharvaveda, in order to ward off evil powers or harmful consequenses of faults committed This distinction is however more schematic than what practice shows And to this whole complex of sacrificial literature the different Brâhmana-texts compiled in numerous Veda-schools join themselves The interpretation of the details of the sacrificial acts found in these texts, which points in the direction of a world-wide symbolism, is most prominent in the so called *Aranyakas*, which partly contain, partly are the *Upanishads*, the only part of the Vedas which is really living at the present day This is the part which, with its sublime visions and mystic-monistic tendency, has attracted the attention of so many Europeans, and still in our own time seems to make its influence more and more felt in the spiritual life of Europe and America

The whole of this literature the Indians consider as sacred It is not due to man or to human collaboration, but has existed from eternity and been »seen« by ancient *rishis* in succeeding world-periods and through them been brought to the ken of man, Çûdras and women being, however, theoretically debarred from listening to their recitation *Çruti* "what has been heard" is the ancient Indian designation of this sacred tradition

For the moment, however, we are mainly concerned with the Rigveda only, and with the people we learn to know in its hymns It was, as we learn from the language, religion, culture and, to a certain extent, from anthropology, an Indo-European people, which had been separated from the other Indo-European tribes — last of all from the Iranians It had invaded the north-western part of India through the mountain-passes, in one or more waves

When this movement of the population took place is difficult to decide It is partly dependent on how to explain the occurrence of names of Indian gods, such as Mitra, Varuna, Indra, and Nâsa tya, and of Indian numerals and technical terms in a manual of horsetraining in the Mitanni realm in the second millennium B C, whether they are traces the Indo-Aryans have left behind during their south-eastward wanderings, or, what is just as likely, due to

Brahmin in devotion

the influence of these tribes when they had already settled in India At all events we can be certain that the Indo-Aryans were settling in the Panjab in the course of the second millennium B C, and that the Rigveda has been gradually composed then and in the following period

The people which we have to do with here is, in many respects, clearly akin to their cousins in ancient Europe, the Greeks and the Northern peoples We have to do with "primitive" com-

munities, who lived in immediate contact with nature, whose rhytmic course formed the center of the cultic festivals, where the people assembled together with their gods, in order to have their share in the annual revival of good forces and the defeat of the evil ones. And each individual had his place within the family, whose success and force formed part of his own self and made him partake in the blessings of life. Myths and legends were expressions for, or poetry about, the cult festivals, in which the individuals, through the family and the family through the totality of the people, felt themselves as a totality comprising all those who belonged to the tribe. It was a unity based on common experience, common cult and common cultic poetry, which endowed each individual with the force which, within this warlike and war-loving society of conquerors, led to a feeling of buoyancy and cheer. High age, numerous children, thriving herds of cattle, beautiful women, riches and gold were what man aspired to, whether he was a petty king who led his people in war and upheld justice in peace, or a priest, an agriculturist, a cattle-breeder, or an artisan, those classes who were necessary for the carrying out of such tasks as were necessary for the society

But if we turn to our sources in order to investigate especially the religious contents, it cannot escape our attention that we are faced with different ranges of conceptions which reveal the fact that the Rigveda contains matters which are widely remote from each other both in time and in place We find features, religious and mythological, which point backwards, to relationship with those of other Indo-European peoples; we also think that we can feel, with some certainty, what was of actual interest in the society which we consider as the true Vedic one; and we are over and over again puzzled at a way of thinking and a world of images which in their later development will bring us face to face with religious experiences of a quite different kind from those prevailing in the Rigveda. We are still far remote from a full understanding of these texts, more than a third part of the contents

is still as difficult of access at it was to the Indians themselves two and a half millenniums ago. The Nirukta (derivation, etymology), a work from about 500 B.C., tries to explain a series of difficult stanzas in the Rigveda, and it is to a great extent the same words and notions which created difficulties then as those we are troubled with to-day.

Some conceptions of divine nature evidently go back to the period of Indo-European unity. The common word for "god" is *deva* (Latin *deus*), which denotes a resplendent celestial *light-being* (*div*), and such a being we learn to know in *Dyaus pitar*, "Father Heaven", (the Zeus pater of the Greeks, the Juppiter of the Romans), once invoked together with Mother Earth, and frequently mentioned as father of various gods, such as Ushas, Agni, Parjanya, the Açvins, etc But this Father Heaven does not play the rôle of an All-Father as compared with his European namesakes. In India his rôle is a rather poor one, and he is mentioned without any special emphasis in connection with other gods and did not, evidently, much interest the ancient hymn-poets, *and still less had he a prominent place in the worship of the* people Like other deities, he shows that we have not in the Rigveda, as has often been assumed, a mythology in growth, but a mythology in decay. What saves others of the oldest deities is partly their share in the cult, partly the inspiration they have instilled in their eulogizers to evolve adventures and legends connected with their names. Connection with a celestial phenomenon, *e g* with Heaven itself, based only on the sound of its name, is not sufficient for providing it with vigorous life, then the conception is apt to stiffen into a cliché, which can be endlessly applied in hymns and invocations without bringing about any true religious realization.

I have no doubt that the personification of various natural forces and happenings has contributed much less to fill the conception of divinity with life than has usually been assumed. We do not find a god of the storm, a god of the feeling of

desolation in the jungle, etc., but, as we shall see, the strongly felt sensations produced by nature may inspire us in such a way that living beings can be evolved on the background of the nature-impressions one has intensely experienced, as *e g* the crushing horror which was and is connected with a stay in the jungle at night time

In spite of the fires lighted in the jungle villages as a protection against spirits and wild animals when darkness sets in, powerful and terrible shapes seem to emerge from the dark so excitingly that no exuberance of imagination is needed in order to give shape to the mental sensations which nature here produces Such effects naturally become much more impressive later on when the Aryan tribes spread east- and southwards and came under the influence of subtropical and tropical nature and climate and thus were exposed to the very violent sensations which are called forth by the luxuriant productivity of an unhindered and overwhelming nature

In the times of the Rigveda the people was subjected to other sides of nature's life, but these sides also evoked phenomena which were in their way just as full of life as those of tropical nature It is not the storm which is personified as a god, nor is it a figure that provokes or rules over the storm that is constructed, we have to do with shapes originating in the sensations created by storm and its force when storm gods are spoken of In this connection it does not signify anything that the Indians themselves had begun to reflect upon the connection between natural phenomena and nature gods These are mere speculations, arising when they were trying to interpret the ancient hymns by means of reflection The decisive factor is the mental or sensitive realization, which creates gods At all events Dyaus pitar has not had the good fortune to be made really alive on the basis of the nature-impressions just mentioned, and in spite of his venerable age he had to be content with a very modest place within the pantheon of the Rigveda

Some scholars have attempted to make Heaven, beside other natural phenomena, the foundation of a god of an importance quite different from that of Father Heaven, *viz Varuna* Also in his case we can trace a pre-Indian origin, for both he and his asso ciate, Mitra, belong to the common Indo Aryan sphere, Mitra under the same name and Varuna under the designation *Ahura*, the same word as the Indian *Asura* (the powerful, valiant one) This designation is used in Vedic times about several gods, but quite especially about Varuna, while later on it denotes the cousins and enemies of the gods, the demons, against whom the gods are in perpetual war Already in pre Indian time Mitra appears as the guardian of right, the sanctity of the oath, and the fulfilling of obligations, who follows man's life through his scouts and pun ishes Evil And this is just what Mitra, and prominently Varuna, take care of in Indian tradition It is therefore not to be wondered at that Varuna is conceived in the image of a just king, who wat ches over the maintenance of right in the state

Both he and Mitra are called guardians of *rita*, i e the norm, the law, which the whole Universe and all living beings must follow, and which makes it certain that all natural phenomena follow in regulated course, thus excluding the accidentality and incalculability which is so fatal to man, and which creates insecurity as to the course of nature Rita is the base, the ab solutely necessary foundation of all our doings and life Rita thus, through a transition of ideas, is identified with what is real, true, and obtains, as truth, an importance in man s life correspon ding to that occupied by Norm and Regularity in Universe From this view-point it is not unintelligible that just the two guardians of rita are called kings, kings as the guardians of right All these are conceptions which go back to the Indo-Aryan period, and which are still prevailing in the Indian epoch They are the gods who take care that engagements are kept and promises are not broken, and therefore they come near to spheres which are comparatively foreign to Vedic time, *viz* the ethical Trans

gressions of the Law are punished both on the transgressor and on his descendants, as is natural in a society where the family is the primary thing and responsible for the acts of the individuals. When Varuna's scouts come across law-breakers, these are bound with his slings, and the scouts move about in the world, unknown to each other, as is the custom in the state. The ethical side is most apparent where individual man's relations to Varuna are spoken of; in his invocations he may hope for commiseration, Varuna is implored to tell what one's sin *(enas)* has been, one prays to him to be delivered from one's own and one's ancestors' misdeeds, and one excuses one's self stating that it was not one's own prompting that led to the evil deed, but the influence of drink, anger, gambling, madness, thoughtlessness, or the influence of older men.

There is here a feeling of repentance, a slavelike contrition, which seems quite un-Indian, and which rarely meets us in other connections than in relation to Varuna; one has rather the feeling of being on Semitic soil. A historical connection with the Semites is no doubt quite improbable, we can only state that Varuna represents features in human nature with which also the Indians were acquainted. A hymn in the Atharvaveda (IV. 16) states that he helps the gods to get informed about man's most secret actions; what two men plan together, that King Varuna knows as the third; hidden he is present everywhere in the world; nobody can escape him, even if he steals out beyond Heaven to the end of the Universe; his scouts keep watch over the whole Earth with a thousand eyes. He sees everything, he has counted man's moments, he has calculated everything like a skilled gambler, who calculates how to throw his dice; his slings will bind him who speaks untruth, but he, who speaks the truth, will escape. "bind him with a hundred slings, Varuna, let not the liar escape Thee; with hanging belly the miscreant shall sit like a vessel with split joints!"

Setting aside the final hateful curse on the poet's enemy, whom

dropsy shall befall, we here find a truly ethical conception of the omniscient god's watching over man's life and actions; typically Indian it is not, as already mentioned, but it can easily be understood as a further development of the conception of the law-protecting king. Or is there still a feeling of malaise at the bottom, a wish to explain the many cases of seeming injustice that life presents us with as actions of judging and punishing authorities who pursue the law-breaker beyond all limits?

It is not so much trust as fear that Varuna instills into his eulogists, and it is characteristic that is is especially the faculty of crafty camouflage, of wonder working illusion (*mâyâ*), covering themselves and deceiving others, which is ascribed to Varuna and Mitra.

We here come across a word which, later on, will play an important rôle in the religious history of India, but which at this stage does not contain any deep thoughts. Nor does it strike us as especially ethical, but it is well suited to the uncanny Varuna.

That Varuna is also praised as he who has made firm heaven and earth, directed the sun's course, who breathes in the wind, makes moon and stars shine, and the rivers flow to the sea, is of smaller interest. In the moment's inspiration such things are said about many Rigvedic gods. On the other hand it is of interest to find a certain connection between Varuna and water. It has already been mentioned that his dreaded punishment is dropsy, and even at the present day the Indians touch water when swearing or undertaking obligations, *e. g.* when an official yearly swears fidelity to his ruler. That there is a connection between exterior and interior purification, that *e. g.* ethical defilement can be removed through a bath, preferably in a sacred well, river, or lake, is generally assumed; in ethics much is bound up with an aesthetic sensation. That Varuna in the later religious development becomes a water-god, riding on a crocodile, is also well known, it is a small, modest position he comes to occupy after having had to give up his important rôle in Vedic times. Several Vedic

gods have had a similar fate, they are treated like officials who have had great influence in the administration but, in their later days, have to be content with a modest appointment as postmasters in a remote desert. In Varuna's later association with water, which can, with some good-will, be traced in the Veda, it is difficult to explain the rôle of water as a factor in oaths and promises of fidelity, and that *rita* in Sanskrit also means water (the floating) does not help us We can scarcely get further than to state that touching water is a symbolic act which worked like a purification, also ethically, and thus became the foundation of the "purity" of an assertion, a statement, an oath

Varuna and Mitra were the sons of *Aditi*, one of the noblest appearances in the Rigveda, but not one of the most alive ones Even she seems to point back to a tendency to personification in the common Indo-European periods, and, though she is sometimes spoken of as a cow, the Indian ideal of fertility and fulness, she is less especially Indian than many other deities in the Vedic times She is hailed as the great Mother of gods and time after time named Mother, not only of the two gods just mentioned, but also of others who are grouped together as the Ādityas, among whom *Aryaman*, a figure connected with marriage, who is already met with in the common Indo-Iranian period, but little developed, and at times of other groups of gods

Like her famous son she is implored to forgive sins, to deliver from sinfulness, and she is also a guardian of *rita* Her mighty motherhood has probably to some extent been evolved through poetical imagination Here, as so often elsewhere, it is difficult to decide what is a living religious reality and what is, as mentioned, due to poets, highly gifted ones, it is true, but sometimes working by routine

To decide whether a deity is still alive or only continues her existance as a kind of cliché, is not always easy If we leave out of consideration such features as may be due to literary sources, as already indicated, or altogether to poetical fiction, there are

others, who sometimes seem to be quite alive, but at other times make the impression of being dead gods Having acquired a certain familiarity with the language and the way of thinking in this very old text, the Rigveda, we will, however, as a rule not be in doubt about when we have to do with real living religion We see before us beings full of life, and situations full of actuality, without any doubt pointing to the shaking up of the souls, common to the poets and the people, which finds its expression in the cult and the sacrificial hymns It would have been an invaluable help in our attempts to judge about the value of this divine world in the eyes of the Vedic Indians if we had been sufficiently acquainted with the cultic acts whose performance was necessary for life's lawbound course, for the suppression of Evil, and the victory of the good, fertilizing and life-giving forces But here we are, in my opinion, faced with a difficulty of the kind we are unhappily so often faced with in the working out the problems of Indology relations and materials do not go together In the Rigveda we have in the first line a collection of sacrificial hymns of great extent and rich contents, and in the Brâhmanas an immense collection of ritual literature Nothing would seem to be easier than to take a note of which hymns were used in the various phases of the cult, and then to draw our conclusions about their cultic significance, and thus arrive at a better understanding of them But we find that it is, most often, not at all those hymns which we should expect to find that are quoted, but others, rather futile ones, which do not tell us anything, and where it is the mention of the name of some god which seems to have led to its use With regard to Varuna his name is most frequently mentioned in connection with a series of cultic acts, his slings, his punishment through dropsy, and his stay in the water are alluded to, but a really living impression of his activity is difficult to get in that way There is probably a considerable span of time between the ritual literature and the old hymns which

were often not understood any more. On the other hand, it is evident that many of the hymns have been composed for use in the cults, we must therefore try to evolve the cults from the hymns themselves, if we want to understand them, for in the times of the Brâhmanas they have often stiffened into unintelligible formulas which were used because they contained important words and so continued an apparent life in the ritual and technicalities in the Brâhmanas

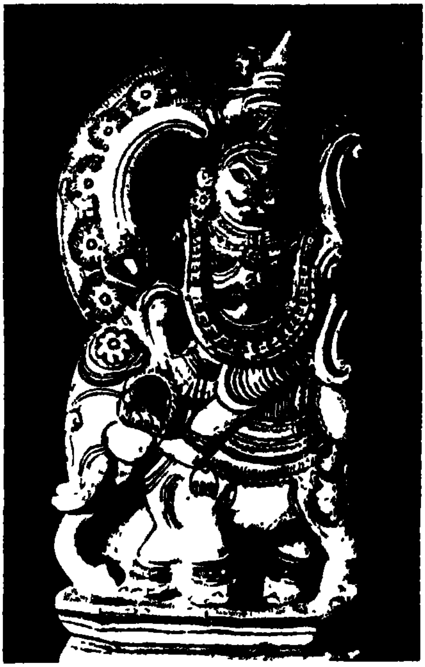
To return to Varuna, there does not seem to be much further information to be found in the hymns adressed to him That he is so prominently addressed as "king' and plays a prominent rôle, especially in the Râjasûya-ritual (the anointing of the king, etc), might lead us to assume something in the way of a sacred kingship, but this would be an inference in which we will, I think, be disappointed That the royal title is applied to a great god, is not difficult to understand

Of importance is the account about Çunahçepa connected with the Râjasûya It takes the form of a cultic drama, based on the conception that the successor to the throne is sacrificed and restituted King Hariçcandra has no son, and pravs to the god to get one, and King Varuna grants it, provided that the son should be sacrificed to him The son is born, but Hariçcandra tries to postpone the sacrifice under various pretexts At last he informs his son of all the circumstances, but the son refuses to let himself be sacrificed, whereafter the god strikes the king with dropsy After the lapse of six years the son buys the son (Çunahçepa) of a poor brahman as a substitute, he is, however, saved by invoking the gods, and is adopted by the famous rishi Viçvamitra, while the king is healed from his disease

Not the least interesting detail of this tale in the Aitareya Brâhmana is what is said at its end "Even if he does not perform the sacrifice, a king shall let this story be recited, then he is free from all sin *(enas)*"

Thus we have the following stages: the human sacrifice of the king's son, the sacrifice of a substitute, and, finally, the mere telling of such a human sacrifice with the same effect as its actual performance.

It is an evolution we also meet in other connections where



Indra riding his elephant

the tale of or listening to the tale of a sacred action as *e g* a pilgrimage has the same effect as the action itself.

It is chiefly the Adityas who are designated as "kings" in the Rigveda, and especially Varuna, but also Mitra (often together with Varuna), and Aryaman, and further, — beside occasionally Agni and the Açvins — Soma, Yama, and, sometimes, Indra.

And just this *Indra* is Varuna's great competitor, who won

a popularity which Varuna never obtained. An attempt has been made to find an expression of their rivalry in a hymn of the Rigveda (IV. 42), where both are speaking. But probably wrongly. Nor is it probable, as Leopold von Schroeder thought, that we have to do with a cultic drama I suppose that the hymn is a poetical stabilization of the notions of an older cultic act aiming at limiting the spheres of the two forces against each other, in order to vivify them and make sure that they will not fail.

Varuna says "To me the kingship belongs, all the gods follow my will, I am King Varuna, the Asuric powers have been established in me since the dawn of time, I have created Heaven and Earth and all beings, and I upheld them I have caused the waters to swell and founded Heaven in the site of right *(rita)*, I, the son of Aditi, have, with right as the foundation, expanded the threefold earth "

Indra says "Me men invoke when they go out for plunder with the fair horses or when they are surrounded in fight I provoke strife, I, the bountiful Indra, and I cause the dust to whirl; all that I have done. No divine force can keep me back irresistible as I am, when the Soma drink and hymns have inebriated me, both of the limitless worlds are in fear "

Then the poet adds the assertion that all beings know this Indra is known as the slayer of demons *(Vritra)*, and as he who gives the waters free course And then the two gods' might is brought into reference to a concrete case, where they have helped, and finally they are invoked for riches and cows.

We may interpret this hymn as we like, the difference between the two gods is described in a way which agrees with what we read about them elsewhere. The sources of inspiration which have been at work in forming Indra's personality, have been of various kinds. He emerges from rough weather, from storm and rain, thunder and lightning, from athmospheric conditions which were of decisive importance to the Aryans in their advance east- and southwards The nearer definition of him has been

effected under the impression of the perpetual fights against the dark-skinned tribes, the *Dâsa* and *Dasyu*, who ruled the country before the Aryan invasion

It is not then to be wondered at that Indra is the Rigvedic god who is most frequently invoked, and he can be characterized as the real national god of the classes for whom the Rigveda is the expression But in the evolution of the picture there are evidently many motives from fairy-tales that have been at work, and just therefore the picture becomes so full of life In spite of the Rigveda being prominently a monument of the culture of the higher classes, Indra is provided with many popular traits He is a heavy drinker of Soma, and as such gets strong enough to perform the valiant deeds he is praised for, in one hymn (X 119) he appears as dead drunk and bragging, he is not less greedy of flesh, he is without an equal as a brawler, a giant in look, when he rushes forward, armed with the thunderbolt *(vajra)*, on his chariot drawn by two yellow-brown steeds A series of powerful deeds is commemorated, first and foremost the victory over various demons, as well over small *râkshasas*, such as those who still at the present day play so many mad tricks with the population of India, and which the classical literature never gets tired of telling about, as also over the great enemies of gods and men which belong to the oldest periods

More than any other deed his fight against *Vritra* is praised, the Serpent *(ahi)* who encompasses the waters and shuts men off from the goods so necessary for their welfare This "dragon-fight", of which we have parallels in the Northern Countries, in Greece and Iran, is pictured with violent vivacity in the old hymns, fairy tale motives are mixed up with the narrative, which is often worked out with great poetical art The Indians have themselves made their reflections about the real meaning The Nirukta (5th cent B C) says "Who is Vritra?" and the answer is "The etymologists say "the clouds", the students of legends say "a demon, the son of Tvashtar" Rain is produced by a

combination of water and lightning, that collision is figuratively described as a fight, and both the hymns and the Brâhmanas speak of Vritra as a Serpent, letting his body swell he keeps the waters back, when he was slain, the waters streamed"

Here we are thus met with the conception so natural in India that Indra's great deed consisted in letting loose the waters that were kept back in the hills, and giving them a free course, to the advantage and blessing of man, whose whole welfare undeniably depends on the water of the rivers and, in later times, on the timely setting in of the rain And the assumption that a poetical refashioning of catastrophic occurrences in nature has its share in the formation of myths, cannot be put aside Such a poetical cooperation is of decisive importance with regard to many things in India's religious literature But the fight between Indra and Vritra can also be explained otherwise

It has been mentioned above that in the myths we often have a kind of text-books for cultic representations, and that we, in the hymns of the Rigveda, often can trace a certain connection with the cult, be it that the words of the hymns are direct replications of answers used on the cult-place, or that the hymns can be considered as the poetical out-come of ancient cultic plays

Building on the investigations of Vilhelm Grønbech, a Danish scholar L Buschardt has given an expose of Indra's victory over Vritra as the ritual demon-slaying in the Soma cult Vritra comes into being on the cult-place, where also Indra's fight against him takes place The demon contains both good and bad elements, in him is found all knowledge, honour, nourishment, happiness and power, combined in the notion "the waters", that through which he is this world All this he has usurped, and it must not be destroyed together with him, but brought over to Indra's side before he be killed Through the acquisition of what is good the slaying of the demon becomes a new creation of the world of gods and men and the world order, through the killing valuable cultic objects are gained, *e g* the Soma

drink; but Indra feels himself guilty of murder, though it is a sacred killing, thus leading to murder of the sacrificial animal that is identical with the demon. Life is created in the cult, which at the same time slays the demon. This creation must always be repeated; the means of communion is in this case Soma, the sacred drink, the pressed Soma-stalks are the ritual imitation of the slain demon After the pressing and the killing of the demon the identification of Soma and the demon ceases The people has now passed through the exciting fight and the defeat of evil; but the fight must always be renewed, the new creation of life through the defeat of evil powers.

This explanation, which is supported by numerous quotations from the Brâhmana-literature, shows how much we can learn from the ritual literature about the myths of the Vedic time, but it is not thereby proved that it is the only possible explanation. It will often be found that different interpretations of the religious phenomena in the time of the Rigveda make their contributions to their understanding from different points of view

In performing his vigorous deeds Indra is often assisted by the *Maruts*, a group of gods for whom the source of inspiration is unmistakable It is the overwhelming violence of the hurricane which has driven the Vedic people to imagine a host of resplendent heroes, who are sometimes said to have been begotten by Vâyu, the wind, with Heaven. They shine like gold, often in connection with lightning, in magnificent array, when they hurry along in their chariots Thunder and rumbling follow in their wake, trees are uprooted and forests laid waste, the rain rushes to the earth and covers up the sun, the rain which is like milk and honey for earth and man They sing when Indra fights the demon and therewith increase his vigour; they are shining followers of kings, but we also hear about estrangement between them and Indra, when they feel themselves neglected in the sacrifice. Just because they appear so distinctly as an expression of what the Vedic people experienced in the fury of

the wind, it is not only what is good that they represent, but also a feeling of horror surrounds them, so that they are implored to keep the lightning away from their worshippers. It is at one and the same time the sublime and the terrific aspect of the storm which has instilled into the Aryan tribes the mentality which created the Maruts, both with regard to their rôle in the sacrifice and their poetical configuration.

It is, I think, evident that, just as we must be careful not to identify the Vedic gods with phenomena of nature, *e.g* Varuna with heaven or the moon, just so it is certain that the intense experiencing of such an overwhelming nature as that of the Indian climate must find expression in a people so sensitive of and dependent on nature, not only in the evolution of ritual myths and poetical constructions, but in the immediate appropriation itself creative powers were set in motion which projected the experiences into space Everybody who has been under the influence of nature's productive pressure, under India's sun or of the gloomy evil-boding darkness of the jungle, can testify that in this way gods come into being

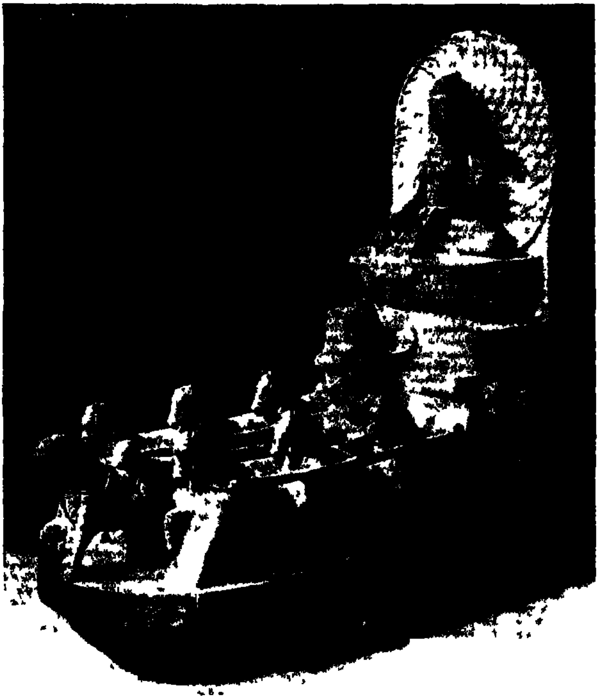
No wonder that the wind itself, *Vâyu* or *Vâta*, is hymned He is, significantly enough, if we think of the experiences in storm, not conceived so alive in the hymns as the Maruts A single figure must look dull on the background of the multiplicity which has given the inspiration to the creation of the Marut-crowd The doublet Vâta-Vâyu is clearly connected with rain and thunder, and the purifying power of the wind seems to have endowed Vâta with healing and purifying qualities It is natural that the wind is called the gods' breath *(âtman)*, as he himself is produced from purusha's breathing *(prâna)* in the ritual sacrifice where the gods created the world in sacrificing the primordial man *(purusha)* I shall only mention that here is the possibility of a further development in the direction of pantheism. Swedish scholars, Kr Ronnow and Stig Wikander, think that they can prove that Vâyu has played a much greater rôle in the earlier

Indo-Aryan times, than the Indian texts show. As the cosmic breath he has been of importance for the later development, because he represents Cosmos with which we become united in ecstasy. Vâyu is the expression of a conception behind the official religious manifestations, which it is possible to reveal. We shall have to look forward to further documentation of this conception

Instead of "it rains" Sanskrit often has "the god rains", "*Parjanya* rains", just as we have "he rains", with a less pronounced personification, in Northern dialects. And in this way the expression has become a mere cliché. But it points back to a way of thinking where also the rain, which in the tropics has a much more violent character than we are accustomed to, has led to the conception of an acting deity And it is felt to be natural that such a god is connected with fertility He does not play any great rôle, the functions attributed to him are more prominent with other gods. But he is described as a bull who roaring places the seed in the plants, the whole world at the same time being in fear of him, when he uproots the trees and slays the evildoers. How much of the picturing is poetical fancy and how much is real mental sensation is not easy to decide

One would have expected that the Sun, which in tropical India is felt simultaneously as a burning and scorching pain and as a light-giver who drives night's evil forces to flight, might have inspired sensations both of horror and of emancipation, but the former is not actually the case. That is probably due to the fact that in North-Western India one was not so much tempted to feel the sun as something evil, as it became natural to do later on in other surroundings. The sun was also looked upon as a celestial body, which now this god now that god placed in the skies, and that the sun was *e g* Varuna's eye revealed a desire of poetical picturing more than a real belief. The movements of the sun and other celestial bodies were dependent on the law-bound regularity, the *rita*, which it was the Indians' most

important task to secure through sacrifice to those gods who were held to be its guardians. And the sacrificial feasts developed more and more into acts, which in themselves were identical with the law-boundness, were its representation, whose production warranted the infallibility. It is not unlikely that the hymns ad-



Surya in his carriage

dressed to the sun are poetical expressions of older cultic acts, which are now difficult to reconstruct. *Sûrya* (the word simply means "sun") is always described in a way which shows that the singer is thinking of the celestial body itself. His function is the far-seeing spying on the whole world, whose good and evil acts he observes, he rolls up darkness as a hide and measures

out the day, he drives away disease and evil dreams It is in part the same which is said about *Savitar* (the word means "Stimulator"); the description of him dwells on his golden splendour, which marks his whole person, his chariot, etc. Also *he* drives away bad dreams, demons and sorcerers; just as he in the morning awakens all beings to life and sends them to rest in the evening The law-bound progress of the sun is dwelt on, and here we have the original cultic element in his worship; the rest is in reality only obvious matters, which will present itself to an impressible observer of nature's course, when the aim is to strengthen the phenomenon through effective words; it is a strengthening of those forces which is a principal motive in the development of the hymns

We have the same feeling about another deity, which the Indians also consider as a god of the sun, *Pûshan* That he drives through the universe in a car drawn by goats gives him a certain popular tint, just as his favourite food, gruel But what makes his movements especially valuable to men, and which is an incentive to strengthen him, is his intimate knowledge of the roads He guards every path and removes the dangers connected with travelling, he follows the cattle on its way and helps to find lost beasts He is a god of herdsmen

In the description of this divine world I have been brief in comparison with the extensive, often very beautiful, descriptions the poets have given us in a frequently very artistic form My aim has only been to define the psychological point which gives us the answer to the question What's Hecuba to him? and at the same time to seek the psychological background from which the god has evolved

If we want to deal with the goddess *Ushas*, dawn, in the same way, not much will be left, for with her everything is poetry, at all events with regard to the eulogists' share in her Not that she appears altogether personified, on the contrary, it is the natural phenomenon itself the poets most expatiate on,

but it is depicted in vivid colours. Ushas is the resplendent young woman, rising from her bath and removing night's black robe. She drives away bad dreams and the spirits of darkness; she awakens birds and men and sends them on to do their work; she opens the way for the sun, who follows her like a young man his lass. She might be called the sun's wife, but also his mother, because she comes before the sun, she may also be called the night's sister, etc., etc. All these relations to nature can of course be infinitely varied by skilled poets, it is only worthy of notice that in the Ushas-hymns we almost always have to do with first-class poetry. The poets drip a touch of sadness into their songs at the thought that the succession of the dawns shows life's decaying course. In the same way we are moved to reflect at the sight of this young woman who, adorned by her mother, lets her body be seen, and who now is compared with a dancer, now with a *fille de joie*, who smilingly uncovers her breasts before us. But behind all this poetry lies, of course, as the point that gives it religious importance, the attempt to secure, through the increasing underlining, that the coming and going of the dawn never break with nature's law-bound course. That one may rest assured that, just as Dawn has appeared to-day in right time so it will continue in eternity to adapt itself to the mechanism of the universe.

There are two gods, the *Açvins*, to which Ushas stands in especially friendly relation. These twins can be traced to common Indo-European conceptions, for they distinctly remind us both of the Dioscuri of the Greeks and of two Lettish gods who come riding to win the sun's daughter, just as the Açvins are chosen as husbands by the sun's daughter *(Sûryâ)*. They do not ride, it is true, they always drive in their three-wheeled golden car. There has been much speculation about their significance and origin, the Indians have done so long before the beginning of our era. The Nirukta, mentioned above, says about them: "Some say they are Heaven and Earth, others that they

are Day and Night; some think they are Sun and Moon, while the investigators of legends say that they are two pious kings."

It is not without interest that we find all these interpretations also with our historians of religion in the last century!

The most prominent trait about these two gods is their helpfulness towards people in need, we are told that they restored old Cyavâna to youth, true after a not very nice attempt to seduce his wife — according to later Vedic literature They saved Bhujva, who was about to perish on the sea; they rescued Atri, who had been thrown down into a burning cave, to Viçpalâ they gave an artificial leg, as she had lost her food during a fight, and to the aged Ghoshâ, who sat unmarried in her parents' house, they procured a husband. They are also famous physicians, who can restore the sight and cure maimed people It is therefore not improbable that one of their denominations *Nâsatya* is connected with German "genesen" (Sten Konow)

They are very popular in the Rigveda, not so much however with their fellow-gods A Brâhmana-text states that Indra wanted to keep them away from the Soma sacrifice, because as physicians they had behaved too familiarly with men Through the assistance of Cyavana (as he is here called), whom they had rejuvenated, however, they get their share of the Soma, the account of the same event in the Mahâbhârata tells us how he humbled Indra most miserably.

How great a rôle they have played in Vedic time can be seen from the fact that they are mentioned, together with Indra, Mitra and Varuna, in treaties which Suppiluliumas, the king of the Hettites, concluded with the Mitanni realm in the 14th century B C (here under their other name *Nâsatya*). They exercise a special function in the marriage ritual; the Rigvedic marriage-hymn (X 85) invokes them to drive the bride in their car, but also Aryaman, Pûshan, and other gods are acting on the same occasion.

In the case of the Açvins, we have to do with a divine couple, which it is difficult to trace back to its source of inspiration in

violent or otherwise impressive emotions and sensations of nature to which so many gods owe their existence

The same is the case with two other gods, whose prominent position is due to the role they play in the sacrifices *Agni*, fire, and *Soma*, the drink that gives strength to Indra and other gods for their achievements As regards religious sensation their importance is minimal, so much the greater their cultic significance, and so much more overwhelming the artistic ingenuity with which the poets have taken hold of them and embroidered the smallest details of their function with subtle imaginations Such a tripartition as is here indicated, of religion, cult and poetry, cannot of course be maintained as a sharp separation, but may perhaps help us to marshal the scattered facts we have to do with The Fire, which receives the offerings and brings them to the gods, naturally becomes a favourite with the brahmans, in whose eyes he is the sacrificing priest more than anybody else But to the common man he was scarcely anything else or more than simply Fire The fire of the hearth is indeed a friendly house-spirit, whom one liked to feed with melted butter His mystic appearance at the rubbing of the firesticks or the striking of the flint, his appearance in the lightning, his undoubted existence in the burning sun, and not least his rôle as protector against wild animals and evil spirits, when the fires were ignited at the coming of night, as at the present day they are ignited outside the huts, should be apt to give Agni a prominent position in the life, both of the great and the humble But that did not happen The usefulness and force of the fire was recognized, but one did not let oneself be overpowered by it, not even in its destructive shape, so as to be inspired by a deep religious experience The priests, on the other hand, could not get tired of picturing Agni's functions with inexhaustible fancy He is first and foremost the being by whose tongue the gods eat the offerings, his crackling is the bull's roar, his radiance is like that of the sun, his flames make a noise like the waves, and when he destroys

the forests, he razes the earth like a barber removes the beard; in his car he fetches the gods to the offerings, and thus it goes on *in infinitum*.

Much is said about his emerging from the celestial waters as *Apâm napât* (the waters's son), but he is also thought to dwell in the waters on the earth He has his home in the highest heaven, and he is brought thence to the earth by Mâtariçvan. His threefold nature, as the fire of the hearth, as lightning, and as the sun, gives rise to many explanations. But more than anything else it is his position as sacrificial priest which impresses his human colleagues. He is at the same time Hotar, Adhvaryu and Brahman, and also Purohita, house-priest

Connected with the description of him as a priest is his fame for wisdom; from being familiar with all details of the sacrifice it is not a long step to being omniscient and the designation *jâta-vedas* (who knows all beings) is a frequent appellation just of Agni, which keeps in view both his presence in every house hold and his central position in sacrificial cults.

The second great factor in the sacrifice, the *Soma drink*, is almost of equal importance to Agni As was the case with Agni, Soma's function at the sacrifice goes back to the Indo-Iranian period, where we hear about the pressing of the stalks of the plant, about the mixture of the juice with milk, about the herb growing in the hills, about its real home in Heaven, whence it was brought to Earth, and about its divine nature and royal title, just as with the Indians of Vedic times In reality the rôle of the drink at the sacrificial feasts goes of course much further back and corresponds to what we find of cultic drinking bouts with several other Indo-European peoples. It can namely not be doubted that Soma was drunk by all who took part in these sacrificial Soma festivals (which are the central sacrifice among the ritual apparitions of the Rigveda), though it is constantly told that it is the gods who are invited to strengthen them-

selves with the beverage "We have drunk Soma, we have become immortal; we have come to the light; we have found the gods; what can now a mortal being's enmity or cunning do against us?", we read in one pasage (VIII. 3), with a series of expressions which clearly indicate what has been gained through the communion which the drinking together by gods and men constituted.

In other respects Soma seems to be a nasty bad-tasting drink, but it produces intoxication, and that is the decisive point. Just the ebriety is the inspiring moment at the coming into being of this deity. The wonderful fact is that a drink can produce a state where we feel ourselves filled with illimited strength, so that visions are called forth and nothing can subdue us and resist us, so that we feel ourselves one with all those who are under the same influence. This experience must necessarily lead to the discovery of a power, and the discovery of a power leads to the wish to dominate it, to be master of its coming into being and its function

In the Vedic hymns, as so often in poetry of that kind, it is no doubt the encomium which first strikes us, but that is not the most important part of the hymns; more essential is the capability of the word itself to create the phenomena the hymn describes. The spoken word is frequently identified with the act, if I sing about such and such deeds, the gods will do them and they become real If I picture such and such ritual detail, it functions It is therefore frequently an irrelevant question whether the various gods have taken personal shape or appear as heroes or other acting persons in the myths. Some do it, others don't; that does not in reality affect their religious significance, but teaches us of course a good deal about the Indians faculty as tellers of fairy-tales or as refined poets.

In this connection it is significant that we have not only no representations of gods in Vedic time, but do not even hear

anything whatever to the effect that such representations were produced, images of gods belong to a much later time. Therefore it is also impossible to give illustrations for a chapter about the religious life of Vedic times

Just as little as Agni, *Soma* is a divinity in the sense usually reckoned with in mythology as regards such beings Agni is first and foremost the Fire itself, and Soma first and foremost the plant itself and its juice But just as is the case with Agni, the different stages of the treatment of the Soma plant are described by the poets of the hymns in a poetical language, which utilizes the smallest details for applying the most intricate rules of poetics The procedure itself is so far simple enough. The stalks of the plant are crushed with stones, so that the juice runs through a sieve of sheeps wool into a wooden vessel, where it is mixed with water and milk, thereafter to be served to the gods on the outspread sacred grass Each of these stages of the pressing is described in numberless pictures, such as when the juice drops down into the vessel the sound which is produced is compared with the thundering or the roaring of an ox When it is mixed with water, Soma is the foetus or child of the water Sometimes the waters are not only his mothers, but also his sisters, when the juice flows down, it is a steed, or also a bird, that flies up into the tree (the wooden vessel), etc, etc, *in infinitum*

The intoxiating faculty of Soma makes it life creating and thereby the drink which endows with immortality *(amrita)* There is always talk about the fight for winning this wonderful drink, and later on we hear about numerous fights between gods and demons for winning the drink of immortality More than anybody else it is Indra who benefits from it It is his strenghtening drink for the fight with Vritra, and not rarely his heroic deeds are entirely ascribed to Soma The Soma plant grows in the hills, but its real home is in the heavens, where a hundred iron-castles are guarding it But an eagle comes flying, and after

a fight succeeds in bringing the Soma to the gods, loosing a feather during its flight

Such are the scant accounts we get of this epoch-making event, from which we can infer a ritual act without being able to reconstruct it

The pressing of the stalks itself is, as already stated, usually done my means of pressing-stones, sometimes it is done in a mortar, and the thought is immediately led towards the erotical slang, which is so significant of Indian religiosity, and which reveals erotic experience as a significant factor in religious constructions, just as Agni s appearance by the rubbing of the sticks is sometimes interpreted erotically The mortar is the female genitals, and the pressing the woman s retiring and pushing during the embrace (I 28, 2—3) This is more than a poetical picture that it is the woman s and not the man s function, points in the direction of positive creation

In later Sanskrit Soma means "Moon' In the Rigveda we only quite sporadically find a connection between the Moon and the drink the yellow stalks swell in the water as the Moon waxes in the sky, the gods drink Soma, and the Moon decreases every month like a cup that is emptied This is not yet decisive for the evolution of a Moon-god

One might perhaps be astonished that we do not in the preceding treatise hear anything at all about the Moon inspiring to the formation of a divinity The Moon may be the eye of the gods, *e g* of Varuna, but farther we do not come, and the numerous attempts made by several scholars to make now one, now another god a moongod, are certainly absolute failures The reason for this is probably that the Moon never gave the Indians the shock which creates gods, he was too peaceful, his mild, quieting, cool light was only refreshing The Moon is an object of love in India, but a power that only wills, what is good, has no great chances as a god, gods who are only good have little vitality, one respects them, but does not take much interest in them

Apart from three deities, two of whom — Vishnu and Rudra — became predominating in India in later time, and the third — Yama — will be mentioned in connection with the conceptions about death, those mentioned above are the most living products of religious inspiration among the Indians, and those who in a prominent degree occupy the thought and satisfy the emotional needs. Beside these we find a series of divine beings who, without playing a very great rôle, have their place in the times of the Vedas. We have a nymph of the forest, *Aranyânî*, who is hailed in a small poem (X. 146), which rather makes the impression of being a town-dweller's slightly sentimental and aesthetically coloured impressions in the forest. We have the waters *(âpas)*, which clean and remove dirt and contamination and also save from sin and give health, long life and immortality. They are sometimes identified with Soma. There are the water nymphs *(apsaras)*, the celestial *filles de joie*, there is (though not in the Rigveda) *Kâma*, the god of love, whose arrows hit in the heart and dry up the spleen. And there are deities of activity such as *Viçvakarman*, to whom occasionally (X. 81) the creation of the world is ascribed, as also *Dhâtar* is an attempt to postulate a creator. There is an artisan such as *Tvashtar*, with whom the making of Indra's thunderbolt rests, as also a share in the production of living beings, as moulder, e.g. in shaping the embryo in the mother's womb. There are the three skilled *Ribhus*, to whom also many masterly deeds are ascribed. These gods have certainly played their rôle in various ritual acts, but as expressions of religious life in ancient India they hardly signify anything. The same is the case with a series of divinities whose names characterize them as masters of various appearances such as the Master of the building site (*Vâstoshpati*), the Master of the field *(Kshetrasya pati)*, who is invoked at the beginning of working in the fields, the Master of Progeny *(Prajâpati)*, who shall give numerous progeny, and who becomes a frequently mentioned God-Creator in later Vedic literature, with

out however at any time becoming endowed with a real and full life

To judge from the form of the name, *Brihaspati* or *Brahmanaspati* belongs to this group, the Master of Brahman Here we should expect to find the central point in the living experience of the Indians, the most weigthy and comprehensive of all the religious termini is, as we know, Brahman (neuter gender), which it is difficult to cover with a word from another language, but which we are accustomed to render with force, potency, life, in the Rigveda the sacred word which accompanies the various stages of the sacrifice, later on the primordial force which is the foundation of everything All this may indeed be right enough, but does not, of course, exhaust the contents of the word One feels amused at earlier Indologists definition of Brahman as Frhebung des Gemuthes, fromme Begeisterung, das ausgesprochene Gebet, die fromme Herzensergiessung, Kraft der Begeisterung etc (Grassmann, Worterbuch zum Rigveda 1873), and naive these attempts sound indeed But quite groundless they are not Brahman finds expression in all this, is above all something internal, a state of the soul, a widening of the soul's contents, a rise in the normal life of the soul, an extasis if you like, a creating sensation (affection, mood) He who has read the preceding statements will see that by Brahman I also under stand what I have called the inspiring moment, the effect on the mind which is provoked by violent impressions from the side of natural and other phenomena, and which shapes gods That a 'Master' *(pati)* was postulated even for this Brahman cannot astonish, but what is astonishing is that this deity teaches us so very little concerning the conception he is master of The eleven hymns which, besides other invocations, are directed to Brihaspati are mainly shaped on the same last as so many other invocations to the gods To be invoked as a priest is a feature he has in common with Agni, else one might here find something characteristic of him in being the bearer of the sacred word

and its power Nor can it surprise that he, as possessor of this potency, must have an essential share in the deeds of the gods, since he (especially later on) is their priest, he is often invoked together with Indra, is like him called he who holds the thunderbolt in his hand, and he is his companion in setting free the 'cows', wherewith he drives away the darkness and finds the light This and much more might, it is true, be explained through his position as the god who more than anybody else was in possession of Brahman, but what is said of him is just as often said of many other gods And when we look at what he is asked for in the invocations, we find the same desirable goods which are wellknown to us He is prayed to bestow a progeny rich in heroes and also riches, the king who takes good care of Brihaspati and gives him the first share in the sacrifice, is superior to all his enemies, and his subjects bow down to him of their own accord, just as he wins the riches both of his foe and of his own people Thus Brihaspati, as well as many other gods, is invoked One might, in references to the ruler's needs (IV 80), find a testimony to the effect that the earthly priest and singer thought especially of the interests of his own class, when he describes what is won through homage to Brihaspati, the priest of the gods, for the gods too are indebted to him for their share in the sacrifice (II 28, 2) But it is mainly the same prayers which are endlessly directed to the gods of the Vedic times, that are also directed to the Master of Brahman What this Brahman itself is, we do not learn from these hymns Only this much follows from them that not everybody is in possession of it It must be something that can be evoked through certain doings during ritual undertakings, or through the individual's practices in meditation, in self-concentration The *ecstatic* frame of mind that shapes gods and worlds we hear comparatively little about in the Rigveda

Two great gods stand, Janus-faced, at the threshold between Vedic and post-vedic time, where they are destined

to play the chief rôle, *Vishnu* and *Rudra (Çiva)*, but that does not mean that they are only in an embryonic state in the Rigveda Without belonging to the most prominent ones within the divine world of the time, they have, each to himself, their definite rôle to play, and one may without difficulty imagine both of them as based on conceptions which precede the Rigveda, though it is not possible to point out either Indo Aryan or Indo European namesakes The most living one — who is also the one to whom feelings of pronounced dismal ness are attached — is Rudra, but Vishnu also does not exist merely as a shadow in this period Still it is difficult to see clearly where Vishnu has his origin, there is something curiously theoretical about his appearance, which often causes us to remember that he is, during the time of the Brahmanas, over and over again identified with the sacrifice This might tempt us to assign the same role to him in the Rigveda, as some scholars do, and to explain his share in the deeds of other gods, especially of Indra, through a reference to the importance of the sacrifice as the force lying behind everything However that is scarcely the explanation, and the identification of him and the sun, which is just as popular, does not teach us much either Vishnu is much too friendly a god to be able to cover the highly contradictory impressions which might inspire the shaping of a Sun god In reality there is only one trait which is peculiar to Vishnu in our sources, *viz* his three steps Over and over again he is designated as "he who takes long steps , and such a fixing of the kind and the number of the steps almost necessarily seems to be inspired by ritual representations, as when there is the question about the three steps of the priests and this is explained through the following tale 'for Vishnu is the sacrifice, and with his three steps he won power for the gods, with the first step he won the earth, with the second the atmosphere, and with the last one Heaven" (Çatapatha-brâhmana I 9, 3, 9) And this again leads the thought in the direction of his conquest of the whole earth,

when the Asuras would give the gods as much as he in the shape of a dwarf, can cover in three steps (same Brâhmana). These three steps have of course tempted scholars to identify him with the Sun, which rises, moves across the Heaven, and sets; but this theory undeniably suffers from the weakness that Vishnu's third step does not go downwards On the contrary it goes upwards to the highest heaven, his home, where also Indra and other gods and god-devoted men enjoy their existence On the whole his steps are put into connection with his activity, as he who measures out the earthly spaces, all beings dwell within the territories he has paced, which "filled with honey, are happy, imperishable" This it is, what, in tiresome repetitions, is told about Vishnu, and the measuring out of different spaces of land therefore seems to be the fact from which one must start when one will try to get hold of the fundamental conception which has fostered this god And here it is that the thought of the cult-place seems to lie near at hand, the extremely important measuring out of the distances there, which is undertaken by the priests, can have given occasion to the belief in a being whose function just consists in such a pacing out, and which, through his steps, draws earth, sky, and heaven within the scope of the cult-place And from this point of view it would not be strange at all if the thought were directed towards the sun — which indeed also in its way measures out the space — as one of the visible signs of the activity pertaining to Vishnu. And then one can very well, if one wishes, point to the later Vishnu's weapon, the discus, which often figures as a symbol of the sun But a real identification of Vishnu and the sun seems to me to be excluded. That Vishnu is in the hymns so closely connected with Indra need not astonish us, in the poetical picturing of Vishnu certain heroic attitudes emerge and render him fit to be Indra's companion in the fight against Vritra, but the nearer explanation of their friendship must probably be sought in cultic relations, which are not now quite so easy to explore, as when

the ritual literature stood in a more intimate relation to the hymns composed for the cult, we are also told in the Rigveda how Vishnu brings him (Indra) a hundred buffaloes, a boar and gruel (as a sacrifice?)

Of a quite different kind is his great counterpart, *Rudra*, who also plays a relatively modest rôle in the Rigveda, but later on, beside or in contrast to Vishnu, dominates the whole religious life in India, "ein Gott gewaltiger Posen als Tanzer, Bettler, Bogenschutze, Yogi, Ganga empfanger usw" (W Ruben) Of these poses it is, in the Rigveda, essentially that of the archer we learn to know, the god who spreads terror and desolation around himself, and certainly has had a much firmer grasp on the people than the solemn priest poetry of the Rigveda implies That he is much older than the vedic times is evident, the yogin which we find represented from the Indus Civilization (see above p 23) is closely related to our Rudra Çiva, *if* it is not the Lord *(Içа)* himself Rudra has grown naturally out of the creating sphere of desolation of the jungle The formation of such a figure is felt as quite a matter of course from the mass of elements of danger which are found in the jungle darkness, ghosts, wild animals, germs of disease and the oppresive atmosphere of hostility, must find expression in one or more gods, whose mercy one could invoke, with whom one could try to come to terms, and whom one could bring over to one's own side through flattering him, or them, and attributing to them the possession of healing remedies against illness germinating in the jungle, for he, who can bring disease, is also able to cure it He is implored to keep disease away from the village and not to hit father and mother children and grandchildren, cattle and horses, and he is asked where his soothing hand is, that hand which is a cooling remedy He is, besides, the one who kills like a wild animal though he carries his arrows and his bow with dignity Though he is considered as the father of Indra's helpers, the Horde of Maruts, he never takes a part in their heroic deeds and does not

wage war with the demons, as they and Indra do. On the whole he occupies a somewhat isolated position in relation to the other gods, and the farther down we come in the Vedic time, the stronger the sombre side of his nature and his separate position among the gods is underlined

In the Brahmana literature the gods fear him and his arrows. One text tells how the gods, when Prajapati committed incest with his daughter, formed a being (*viz* Rudra under the names of Bhûtapati and Paçupati) of the most terrifying shape, in order that it might pierce him through (Aitareya Brâhmana 3, 33) Another text calls him straight away robber and cheater, his share in the sacrifice has often a suspect character Both he and Vishnu will have to occupy us later on

Now I have concluded my account of the most prominent series of deities in Vedic time, such as it is evolved especially in the hymns of the Rigveda I have tried to find which phenomena in nature and elsewhere have given the inspiration to the creation of these figures. Without identifying them with one or another force in nature I have tried to find what I would call the psychological moment of inspiration which, in my opinion, often is obvious and which forms the frame, over which the fairy-tale-like or poetical literature of fiction may spread its embroidery Especially productive is an atmosphere of fright and rut, both these factors will be seen to make themselves more and more felt, by and by, as the dependency of the Vedic period of the hymnic culture gets weaker. That upright carriage and dauntless spirit which stamp Rigvedic society, waned successively under the influence of climatic and race-bound phenomena and were replaced by a curious mixture of arrogance towards the gods and weakness before the penetration of the spiritual life by the jungle and the sexual excitement. Fertility rites play an overwhelming rôle in European discussions about such phenomena in the religious history of India; the desire of fertility plays a rôle, but greater still is the cultivation of the erotic experience itself.

One of the latest hymns of the Rigveda, the Purushasûkta (X. 90), in several ways forms a link between the Rigvedic culture and that which stands in full flowering some centuries later. It is the hymn about the primordial man (*Purusha*), in which we find mentioned not only the names of the three oldest Vedas, but also the four castes and their origin are mentioned. We are further told about the creation of the world through a sacrifice performed by the gods, and there is an indication of the fundamental pantheistic conception (if we can speak of Pantheism without a Theos) which dominates most of the religious thinking in India. On account of the impact of these motives this hymn has a prominent position among the many songs to the Rigvedic gods

This whole world is Purusha, it is said, both what has been, and what is to become, and he is master of what is immortal. The gods use him as sacrificial material, Spring is the sacrificial butter, Summer the wood and Autumn the sacrifice From this sacrificial act emerged all animals in the air, in the jungle, in the village, etc., and also the three Vedas and the different metras came forth. The Brahman was Purusha's mouth, his arms became the Kshatriya, his thighs the Vaiçya, and from his feet emerged the Çûdra; the Moon was born from his organ of thought *(manas)*, the Sun from his eye, Indra and Agni from his mouth, and Vâyu (the Wind) from his breath (*prâna*). From his navel came the Air, from his head emerged the Heaven, from his feet the Earth, and from his ear the quarters of the globe, thus they (the gods) formed the worlds With the sacrifice (i.e Purusha) the gods brought a sacrifice to the sacrifice (i. e. Purusha); these (acts) were the fundamental laws.

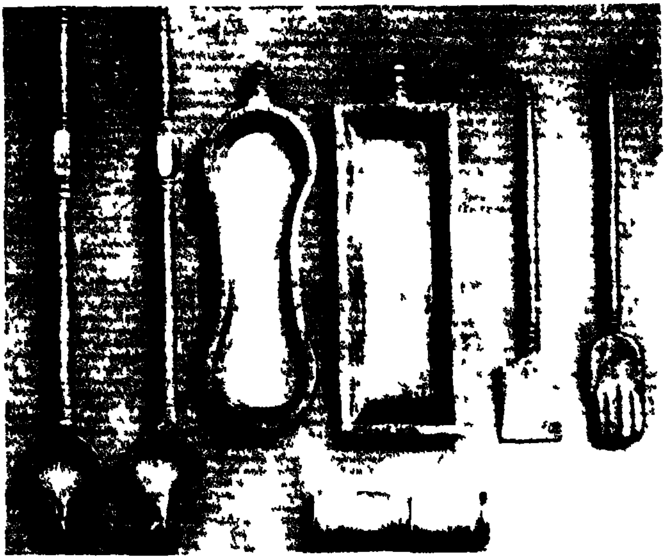
From these fragments two things will have appeared partly the paramount power which was attributed to the sacrificial act, and partly the importance of the *caste system* as the base of Indian society. The village society based on kinship, which forms

the background of daily life in the Rigvedic period, gradually disappears as the Aryans push east- and southwards from their settlements around the Indus and its tributaries. This spreading does not take place without a through-going blood-mixture with the tribes they met, and the more this assimilation between conquerors and conquered made itself felt, the weaker became the fixedness of the old tribal societies. The clergy kept itself comparatively pure and represents the nearest approach to an unmixed race that we meet in India's history. It had already in the Rigvedic period constituted a relatively closed class, supporting itself on the special knowledge its activity exacted, and as the Brahman caste it became the spiritual leaders of the people, as it is still to day. A Brahman did not need devote himself to priestly occupations only, in our own days we find Brahmans in very different occupations (though service in war and in the temples is not considered to be proper), and to a certain degree some freedom in the enforced restriction in occupation of the different castes has no doubt begun to assert itself already early after the rise of the caste system.

To begin with, the division into castes has rather been one of classes than of castes, with ensuing prohibitions of marriage and commensuality etc. Apart from the difference in race between the Aryans (the three highest classes) and the society of the "natives" (the fourth class), both occupation and common kinship have been of importance. But the classic construction of the four castes has, in spite of the many sub castes, formed the frame, within which it was possible to place all the sub-divisions with the exception of the absolutely casteless ones. The *Brahman* caste, the caste of warriors or nobility *(Kshatriya)*, the caste of general traders, artisans, merchants, cultivators, and cattle-breeders etc. *(Vaiçya)*, and, finally, the serving caste *(Çûdra)*, were the four classes within which the Indians could include all individuals fully belonging to the society. These became the real foundation of the life of the society, and that to such a

degree that we must even to day consider the membership of a caste as what makes a man a Hindu, rather than the confession of one or another of the tenets of Hinduism The superiority of the Brahmans has indeed often only been a pious wish whose underlining in the literature of the Brahmans just shows how difficult it was to maintain it towards the warrior caste But the spiritual leadership they did not let be extorted from themselves, and that was, not in the least degree, due to their intimate knowledge of the highly complicated sacrificial ritual

For that was the other matter, which the Vedic hymn, referred to above, gave us an impression of, namely what power lay in *the sacrificial act* Rigveda is a collection of hymns used for the sacrifice It cannot therefore cause wonder that sacrifice plays a great role in this literature, which can really only stand as the representative of the state's worship of the gods, and which must be supplemented with the knowledge of the private cult in the



Sacrificial utensils

homes, if we want to form a complete picture of old Indian religion. What the hymns teach us about religious acts, mainly aims at the acquisition of earthly goods. One prays to one's gods for health and wealth, for a long life, for a numerous progeny, for victory over enemies, etc Only occasionally we come across prayers for forgiveness of sins committed, as mentioned above in connection with Varuna Otherwise it is an insatiable desire for earthly goods and gold which stamps the invocations of the gods, whom one flatters in reminding them of how they formerly have stepped in to help their adherents Indeed, one does not refrain from explaining to Agni, *e g*, how good one would be, if it were Agni who was the supplicant and one self were Agni

All this seems to be quite simple It is a simplification of the relation to the gods which could not be easier to understand One sacrifices in order that they shall overload one with gifts, and one does not offer a thought to sacrifices of thanks In reality, however, much more lies behind the Vedic sacrifice than these simple matters

It has been mentioned above that the hymns are not only composed for use at cultic acts, but that also, in the myths they contain, they give more or less distinct indications of how these acts have been performed They contain partly passages which seem to have been used in cultic plays, partly they seem to have been composed about these acts, with hints which have probably been easily understood by contemporaries, but which to us are anything else than perspicuous Here is a wide field of work for future investigators In connection with the mention of Indra's fight with Vritra reference has been made to an attempt to reconstruct the very cultic drama at the hand of the myths, and with support in the Brâhmana literature, to work further in this way may possibly solve some of the too many enigmas Rigveda presents us with. About one thing we are already clear, that, beside the aim to provide the individual sacrificer and his kin or his society with the desirable goods, the sacrifice had also

another and greater one — *viz.* to keep the law-bound mechanism of the whole nature agoing and to guarantee the infallibility of the course of cosmic forces. And this last aspect of the function of the sacrifice becomes more and more decisive in the later Vedic times and on the whole as long as we have to do with the old Vedic sacrifice For it is certain that this was in the course of time replaced by a general worship with waiting on the god, *feeding and entertaining him, as we know it to-day.* The Vedic sacrifice has long ago ceased to be a factor in India's religious life

But in Vedic times the great sacrificial festivals were still in full bloom Yet we can trace an increasing tendency in the direction of mechanizing the sacrificial acts As far as we seem to be able to get a glimpse of their course through the veil of the hymns, and as we try to evolve what they more or less spontaneously reveal, we have to do with cult-festivals which brought the whole society of the kin together in conjointly reviving the tribe's past and conjointly building up its future History and destiny were revived and created, at sacrifice and drinking bouts, at the games, the gods were present, and all that pertained to blessing of the kin was renewed Each single part of the cultic acts had its corresponding part in the great cosmic phenomena, they are lying as eternal potencies beyond the time and the space they are performed in, they stand as powerful prototypes of the functions of the forces, and become symbolic The participants in these sacrificial feasts themselves become gods in the dramatic course of the acted cults and act on behalf of the whole people In this way the aim of these actings is achieved, *viz* the victory over evil powers, as it has been sketched above in connection with Indra's fight with Vritra, and the new-creation of existence. Such a dramatic cult has been described by Vilh. Grønbech and Johs Pedersen on the background of other cultural societies, and it can hardly be doubted that future work with the Vedic texts will show us quite similar conditions among the ancient Indi-

ans, there are too many details in the hymns which can be explained in the same spirit

It has also been mentioned above that we find very numerous passages which confirm and justify this cultic explanation of the hymns But the picture of the sacrifices which we can form on the basis of this class of literature is, however, in many ways different from what the hymns seem to teach us In addition to the Brâhmanas we have also other sources for our knowledge of the sacrificial ritual of the time Both concerning the private and the common public sacrifices we have collections of handbooks giving detailed instructions In the home it was the daily fire-sacrifice *(agnihotra)* that signified most, at sunrise and sunset it was performed by a single priest on behalf of the housefather Milk of a cow that had given birth to a bull calf was symbolically cleaned by the help of a couple of stalks of kuca-grass, was mixed with water, carried silently around the fire, and sacrificed by being poured into it Then the housefather ate and poured out a libation for the gods, the ancestors, etc Independent of this five great sacrifices' (mahayajna) were made in the morning and in the evening, *viz* sacrifices to the gods (food being thrown into the fire), to the spirits (bhûtas, food being placed round about on carefully cleaned spots), to the ancestors (food left from the last rite), to Brahman (the study of the Veda), and to human beings (feeding of guests, brahmans and beggars) These forms of sacrifice did not, however, belong to the official ones based on the holy tradition *(çruti)* Besides the Agnihotra there were numerous other sacrificial acts which took place at fixed times or on special occasions, *e g* at the inauguration of a house

To the society as a whole the sacrifices offered by a king or another grandee were of course of special importance In them a series of sacrificing priests were functioning, and they took place on a spot prepared for the purpose Of temples we do not hear anything An "altar" *(vedi)* was constructed — *viz* an

oblong place with four sides, where the longer sides were curved inwards, and covered with sacrificial grass, where the gods were supposed to take their seats This "altar was made between the holy fires which conveyed the sacrifices to the gods, consisting of milk, butter, cakes, or the flesh of goats, oxes, horses, etc But it was the Soma sacrifice that enjoyed the greatest popularity, it was this which endowed and gladdened Indra with the intoxicating drink that strengthened him in the fight against the demons Also other gods profited from the drink, just as the feast undoubtedly has taken the form of a drinking bout of the male members of the tribe, which strengthened their feeling of unity and confirmed them in the relation to their gods All the acts that together constituted the individual sacrificial festival were executed in strict conformity with fixed rules, whose maintenance was an indispensable condition for the success of the sacrifice, and its completion often took many days Special weight was laid on the recitation of the accompanying hymns and formulas, a single faulty accent might not only make the whole undertaking useless, but also lead to a result directly opposite to what was the aim This recitation, which was, and is, executed far from the presence of anybody outside the three highest classes, has, with very few exceptions, been impossible for Europeans to witness But he, who has been so favoured that he has been allowed to be present at the genuine, original, Vedic recitation of Vedic stanzas and formulas, can give testimony to the almost incredible precision and accuracy of accent and tune with which they had preserved the more than three thousand years old tradition handed down from generation to generation within the Vedic schools

Among the numerous forms under which the great sacrifices took place, the most celebrated one is the *Horse-sacrifice* To a prince this sacrifice meant certainly that his power was at its highest, and it was admired as an almost unique achievement

On the bank of the Ganges in Benares the spot is pointed

out where the god Brahmâ performed a sacrifice consisting of ten horses Though horses are, and still more were, more rare in India than with us, it is a little difficult to feel imposed by this achievement of the highest god, but the spot (Daçaçvamedh Ghat) is one of the most frequented places of pilgrimage in all Benares, and consequently in all India (It is much used as place of cremation, were the corpses are placed, with their feet in the water of the Ganges, before they are placed on the pyre, the remains being thrown into the river after the cremation)

The sacrificial ceremony begins with cooking rice gruel for the priests, and 4000 cows and 400 pieces of gold are distributed among them After a night s waking in silence and the next evening s fire sacrifices, the king places himself between the thighs of his second queen but under observance of sexual abstinence during the whole night Then the stallion to be sacrificed is brought out and, after a series of ceremonies let loose, together with a hundred old horses, in the direction of North-East, and can now move about at pleasure It is followed by a number of young men of noble birth, who have to protect it against all dangers and to take care that it does not bathe in improper places or have any intercourse with mares In the course of the year one of the priests relates the deeds by the king's ancestors, and each day s narrative ends with songs in praise of the king himself Also some of the other ceremonies mentioned above are repeated throughout the year, and finally the stallion is brought back The king is initiated for the sacrificial feast, a three days Soma festival is arranged, and, after a long series of new ceremonies and some smaller offerings, the stallion is strangled with garments Then the principal queen goes to the strangled animal, a cover is thrown over the two, and the queen places the stallion's member into her womb Afterwards the animal is cut into pieces, the caul is sacrificed, the blood is boiled and sacrificed, and the flesh roasted, whereafter baths and other final ceremonies are undertaken In connection with the just

mentioned ritual act of the queen, which evidently aimed at fertility and strength, as well as under the following rite, a series of remarks of partly extremely obscene contents was exchanged between some of the priests, the women and the king The purpose of this is probably to produce an atmosphere of sexual excitement, which is useful for the aim, and which, as mentioned above, must be considered as, from a religious view-point, a productive and fertilizing sensation Such a screwing up of emotion and productive frame of mind plays a great rôle in the various formations of Brahmanism, and is probably actually a realization of Brahman, which so much ritual and emotional strain has as its object

This must be viewed in connection with the effort, later on common in Hinduism, to further the erotic disposition of the mind The decorations of temples, both inside and outside, occurring everywhere in India, with reliefs of the most unrestricted kind, representations of erotical scenes in highly fantastic manifoldness, can scarcely have any other aim One might of course think that the above mentioned exchange of sayings at the sacrifice aimed at keeping evil influence away, just as ridiculing evil forces is also used in fighting them.

In this connection it might also be mentioned that a question about the meaning of the exciting erotic scenes on the temple buildings is repeatedly answered "it is to keep lightning away" Lightning *(vidyut)* is namely in Sanskrit a femininum, and must therefore be assumed to turn away, blushing when "she" detects the indecent works of art The explanation is without doubt made *ad hoc*, and should not be taken in earnest, but there is perhaps something of a right feeling in the view; I should, however, think that the other explanation — the effort to screw up the erotic frame of mind, favourable for productivity — is the right one It is connected with Indian ascetism *(tapas)*, and it has a similar function as intoxication, both with regard to the feeling

of unity, to mass suggestion, and to collective spiritual life, and also in the direction of furthering religiously productive forces

As the horse-sacrifice so did also *human sacrifices* take place in bygone times Many details do quite correspond to the horse sacrifice, but in its Vedic form this sacrifice does not seem to have been of much practical importance, and have disappeared early That a less complicated kind of human sacrifices has taken place in connection with certain varieties of Hinduism, and with tribes which stood outside its pale, is quite a different matter, and does not therefore belong to an account of religious practice in Vedic times

Even though the whole solemn apparatus, which the Brâhmanas prescribe and explain, preserved its outer form in the older periods, the spirit of the sacrifice itself in the course of time became something quite different from the old appeal to the gods and the cultic acts in which the gods took part Most of what we thought we could read out of the hymns and of what the Brahmanas taught us in explanation of the sacrifice in relation to the various cultic dramas, must be of smaller importance than the mechanism of the sacrifice itself, which must be kept agoing in order that nature's mechanism could develop itself according to law What has been said about Rita, the norm, the law-boundness, the unfailing course of nature's phenomena, now gets a double importance, in so far as it concerns the sacrifice and through it nature, i e the Universe The sacrificial act, which has been performed correctly in every respect, warrants that we may safely trust that the laws of the Universe will be kept, that we shall not be left in the lurch in our expectation that the sun will rise every morning as hitherto done, that the waters will flow to the Ocean as hitherto, that the seasons will follow in each other's wake as hitherto, etc Even the rôle of the gods becomes more and more subordinate, they are only to be considered as requisite in the same way and with the same importance as the utensils employed Keeping this

modest rôle in mind one will understand that those circles who occupied themselves with the whole of this science concerning the sacrifice, did not attach much importance to the gods, when they had to explain the importance of the sacrificial act The personality of the gods plays quite a subordinate rôle in a cult which one might else assume took place to honour them And this rôle becomes more and more modest as the importance of the sacrifice grows Therefore we have the curious state of affairs that the later school, *Mîmâmsâ*, whose task it is to tell about and to explain sacrificial cults, and which in a way is more orthodox than any other, is considered as atheistic, and justly so The polemics of the school against the conception of "god" is not at all without interest, but are more in the way of philosophy than religion, in case it is possible in India to make any distinction between these two cultural factors Now there is a long way from the Brahmana literature to the dialectics of the Mimamsâ-school, but at the bottom the trend of thought is the same The learned priests of the sacrifice, who are the authors of the old ritual literature, and who had to interpret it, formed a sharply delimited guild, which later developed into captious specialists The texts themselves lay greater stress on giving a mystic explanation of the individual sacrificial acts, to explain them symbolically, than on giving a real description of the act and of the relation between its parts

What was demanded from the experts was analyses which could bring together the frequently very widely spread elements of the same sacrifice, reconcile the apparent contradictions in the treatment of the sacrifice, which could further decide who had, and who had not, the right to perform the sacrifice concerned, or to have it performed Analyses which could explain the relation between primary and secondary sacrifices, and which might finally point out how an incompletely described sacrifice could be supplemented. One had to frame a series of rules which could be made the base of the interpretation of the traditional Brâhmana texts

On the background of these indications of how the Brâhmana literature took shape, it will be understood that it is not at all an easy matter to find out the nature of the sacrificial acts. There is not much left of the prayer-sacrifice we frequently find expressed in the hymns, not to speak of the invocations for atonement and pardon of sins.

We can now return to what was said above about the Rita-conception and its contemporaneous importance in sacrificial acts and in the Universe. These two matters cannot in reality be separated, they are interrelated and inseparably bound together, without the one we cannot have the other And thus we understand the immensely important rôle the officiating priests came to play. They alone possessed the knowledge which could make the sacrifice effective, and with them rested the whole world's law-bound necessity, such as it was conditioned by the minutely maintained correctness That the Brahmans succeeded in strengthening their power in this way, which extended far beyond the simple sacrificial technique, is shown by the whole cultural history af India. Though the self-assertion which finds baroque expressions in the literature of Brahmanism did not at all always correspond to the real state of things, the influence of the Brahmans on the population is just as pervading to this day. The conception is that which, through the dependence of the sacrifice on the Brahmans, gives them power in the world, and which finds its expression in a Sanskrit stanza which runs as follows "The whole world rests in the god's hand, but the god rests in the hand of the "prayer", and the "prayer" in that of the Brahman's Therefore the Brahman is to me my god." What is here called "prayer" *(mantra)* is in reality the sacrifice, and the stanza is therefore a popular but fully correct expression of what has been exposed above about the universal necessity of the sacrifice and the sacrificing priest's unconditioned power over the law-boundness of the world. The sacrifice more and more becomes the infallible means for appropriating all the forces

of existence, and it is significant that, in numerous tales in the Brâhmanas, the gods themselves must seize upon the sacrifice as a protection against their perpetual enemies, the Asuras, the demons, who want to arrogate to themselves their dominion And in the creative activity of the gods, it is the sacrifice that is the real creating act, as in the hymn about the sacrifice of Purusha referred to above And the god Vishnu, who in the Rigveda displays his frequently enigmatical nature, is in the Brâhmanas most frequently identified with the sacrifice itself

The god who comes most in the foreground in the Brâhmanas is *Prajâpati*, the God Creator, who in the Rigveda is implored to give rich progeny *(prajâ)* and who makes the cows prolific In one hymn (X 121) he is celebrated as the creator of Heaven and Earth, as the one who can give life and strength, and on whose behest all gods obey, as the only ruler of the whole world, etc In the Brahmana literature it is added that he is the first sacrificer, and in these texts he holds the position as the highest deity, about whom several things, not always flattering, are told, *e g* his attempted incest with Ushas, who, in this connection, is considered as his daughter There is here a tendency to bring together the scattered traits of the Vedic hymns into a central figure, to whom all the different creative functions could be attributed, and it is very probable that a figure such as Prajâpati acted inspiringly on the formation of later great gods, *e g* the personal god *Brahmâ* who appears in many connections without ever having been a really living power in the religious experience of the Indians

But at the same time, when we make a note of such tendencies in the Brâhmanas, we must not forget that the sacrifice as the centre of the thougths of this class of literature is something quite different As already mentioned it is the sacrificial act itself, and not the gods, which is the main thing In the hymn just quoted (X 90) the sacrifice is put into connection with the creative act and becomes a mechanism, which must be kept going, in

order that existence may be kept going. Every detail of the act had its correspondance in the life of the Universe and was indispensable in the economy of existence Therefore the sacrifice is equalized with Prajâpati and becomes at the same time the means through which the gods get power over man, and through which man raises himself to the world of the gods The sacrifice is the creative force of nature, it is necessary for the occurrence of nature's phenomena as they should appear One text says that the sun would not rise if the priest did not sacrifice The inner necessity of the phenomena is secured by the sacrifice, it is like a clock-work that must be wound up in order to keep the whole world going. But the knowledge, which was necessary for regulating the running of the mechanism, thus acquired extraordinary weight; it was, as has already been stressed, in the nature of things reserved for a small circle of specialists And what was decisive in this knowledge was that it was not the extensive knowledge itself which was the deciding thing, but above all the knowledge of the significance of the individual act. This trait was so prolific that it became the starting point for the later on widely distributed conception that knowledge of the significance of an act has just as much effect as the performance of the act itself. With this idea is connected the notion that the narration or reading about the performance of holy acts (*e g* pilgrimage) afford the same advantage as *e g* the actual completion of the travel.

Before drawing the further consequences of these fundamental notions of the Brâhmana literature as they are framed in the latest offshoots, the *Upanishads*, it is time to remind of the fact that this religion of sacrifices was indeed the result of the religious development of the intellectual upperclass and of the richer classes which shared their social interests. Quite different powers of the Unseen satisfied the wants of the bulk of the population. In the *Atharvaveda* and in numerous regulations aiming at the ritual with which the worship of the

gods was performed at home, we find conceptions of the same kind as those we know from the so-called "primitive" peoples all over the world, and which we meet with everywhere in India and in Further India, to mention only those countries All efforts aim at averting the influence of evil spirits, either in scaring them away or in cajoling them with gifts and flatteries The use of texts suitable for that purpose we learn to know in a group of writings dealing with the numberless observances that accompanied the daily life in the Indian homes But when there arose the question of events which had importance beyond every day's monotony, such ceremonies changed character, and required the support of Rigvedic stanzas

Many of the *ceremonies connected with the home* go back to prehistoric times and are closely related to such as are known elsewhere They surround the Indian with an atmosphere of religious considerations and influences Measures for ensuring the birth of a son began of course long before birth, in the second or third month of pregnancy, and were continued as common measures of safety at and after the birth of the son The father breathes on the boy to ensure him a long life, and whispers holy syllables into his ear to further his intelligence Important was *the giving of a name* wherewith the boy got an official name, and besides one which only the parents knew Also in our days one may expose a boy to the danger of attacks from evil spirits by calling out his real name, especially, of course, if one praises his good looks or suchlike things A whole series of such ceremonies accompanied the boy at the different stages of his life, until he became ripe to receive instruction by the Brahman who should impart to him the religious teachings

In the Rigveda we find stanzas (X 85) which were made use of at the *marriage ceremony* This, the most important of all the festivities of the home, only took place after the exchange of gifts, the bridegroom seized the bride's hands, into which

her mother and brother had laid parched grain, then she had to put her right foot upon a mill-stone, through which the firmness of the stone so to say was drawn into her body The grain was offered as a sacrifice and the bride led round the sacrificial fire with her right side turned towards it These rites were repeated three times The next step was important Here the bride, accompanied by the bridegroom, moved seven steps towards the North-East, while water at the same time was sprinkled on their heads, then the bridegroom seized her hand, quoting a Rigvedic stanza, which shall secure for them luck and long life Thereafter the couple proceeded to their future home, and the sacrificial fire was brought along with them, but the first night was spent in the home of a Brahman, where the bride sat silent behind the marriage fire that had been brought with them, until the stars appeared, then the bridegroom pointed at the Polar Star and the star Arundhati in the Great Bear To the former she addressed a Vedic formula »Thou stands firm«, to the latter 'I am bound' At the same time she mentioned her own and her husband's names, thus the fixedness of the Polar Star took abode in her

On their arrival at their own home new ceremonies took place, the three first nights, or, according to other authorities, the first year, there must not be any sexual intercourse between them They rested on the soil during the night and were not allowed to take spiced or salt food only during the fourth night the nuptial cohabitation commenced Atharvaveda (XIV, 2, 33 ff) contains a formula through which it is attempted, in respectful terms, to keep the *Gandharva* Viçvâvasu, who is supposed to have a claim to the wife's virginhood, away from the young woman and refer him to his own wives, the *Apsarases* The Gandharvas are in later Indian religion the musicians of the gods and the Apsarases are their *filles de joie*

An extremely important part of the home rituals are of course those that are connected with *Death* The Vedic Indians did not

know anything about the detailed conceptions of later times regarding the existence that awaited the deceased. The thoughts of the time were first and foremost occupied with life on Earth, and what that might offer. And when they reflected on what came after this life, they hoped for an existence like the earthly one The deceased expected to come to Vishnu's highest abode. Yonder ruled a king, *Yama*, son of Vivasvat Yama sits under a tree with beautiful leaves and drinks in company with the gods, and thither men hope to come. King Yama is not directly designated as a god in the Rigveda, on the other hand he is invoked and invited to drink Soma or to accept offerings of melted butter, and he is asked to conduct the deceased to the gods A *Yama*, who is probably identical with the ruler of the realm of death, is mentioned in a hymn (X. 10) as the first mortal being, and he is the object of a violent attempt of seduction by his sister *Yamī*, a temptation which he resists in spite of her contemptuous abuse This couple, brother and sister, we also meet with in Iran, as twins from whom the human beings are descended, and it is scarcely improbable that Yama, as the first who suffers death, has found the way to the Beyond, where subsequent generations on the same path find a realm of light and spend their life without any shortcomings in the company of Yama and Varuna, enjoying song and flute-playing. Yama can send both the owl and the dove to Earth as his messengers, but the most prominent of these are, however, his two four-eyed, broad-snouted, chequered dogs, who move about on the earth, taking care of man, and guarding the road to Yama's dwelling.

It is not the human souls that leave the body and are conducted to Yama, it is the deceased himself who continues his existence It is in this connection of no consequence whether the deceased were buried (as is still done with children below two years of age and frequently with saints), or cremated on the pyre. *Agni* is considered to purify the corpse before he brings the deceased

to Yama, but he is prayed not to do the deceased any harm, he must not consume him, nor deform his skin and body, but be content with the he-goat which is sacrificed to him at the same time. It is so important that nothing happens to the body, because it belongs wholly to the deceased who goes to the world of the pious, where he will need his limbs. Atharvaveda (IV 34, 2) even points out that one must not burn the genitals of the deceased, "for many women fall to their lot in heaven". If anything has disappeared, the deceased ancestors may help to restore what is lost, and also the death sacrifices may be of use. It is thus as a whole that one continues the existence in Yama's realm, and this realm is the only one of which we get any further information in the Rigveda. The notion of one or more hells does not yet play any noteworthy rôle.

In spite of the promising outlook for the deceased a certain desolation was, naturally enough, connected with death. One did not wish to come too near to the god of death, therefore the footsteps of the funeral procession were wiped out, so that Yama should not find the way back to the living ones, and a stone was placed between them and the deceased. On the pyre were placed, before it was ignited, the dead man's stick or weapons and his wife. However, in Vedic times she was expressly requested to return to the living ones, only later on the passage was, through a "correction" of the text, considered to authorize the cremation of the widow, which had probably been in use in old times but does not occur in the Rigveda. After the cremation the survivors returned home, without looking back, they were now impure for some days. The bones remaining from the cremation were collected in an urn and interred. Thereafter offerings were made to the ancestors, and the regular sacrifices for the deceased person were begun, especially important during the time when he was thought to roam about as a helpless ghost *(preta)*, until he was brought to the dwelling of the ancestors.

Sacrifices to the ancestors were, however, performed over and over again

In one of the hymns where Agni is implored to bring the deceased to the world of the ancestors without doing him any harm, we read (X 16,3) "Let the eye go to the Sun, the breath *(âtman)* to the Wind, go to Heaven and Earth according to what is settled, or go to the water if that is thy destination, or rest in the plants with the parts of thy body". Here several important moments are indicated, and not least the correspondence between Microcosmos and Macrocosmos, which is utilized to the utmost degree in the Brâhmanas, and which is one of the motives which are deepened and explained in the Upanishads in an all-comprising synthesis, where the correspondance between forces in the individual and in the universe is more and more developed into an inclusion of the latter into the former, thus contributing to the formation of the monism which is the fundamental view in the thoughts of the Upanishads

This is one of the starting points of the teaching of the Upanishads Another is the need of metaphysical reasoning emerging in the later parts of the Rigveda We have one hymn (X 129) where the poet throws out various questions aiming at finding an answer to the eternal problem what the world essentially is He speaks of the time when there was nothing existent and nothing non-existent, neither space nor Heaven beyond Did the water exist, the bottomless deep? Then there was neither death nor immortality, there was no difference between day and night, only the One breathed, nothing else existed All was darkness, wrapped in darkness, all was chaos and water The One, the Germ, which was enclosed in emptiness, was born in glow, desire, mind's first seed, seized upon it, the wise found in their own hearts the band of existence in non-existence Who can know whence this act of creation has arisen, the gods are later than the creation of this world Who can then know whence it has come? He, who in the highest Heaven

has watched over it, he may know it, or — rather — he does not know it?

The scepticism, which finds its expression in the last line, is so typically Indian that we are happy to find it already in the younger Vedic time, and the whole, simultaneously deep-going and still slightly *blasé*, reasoning, has not a few parallels in the Vedic hymns. It gives a characteristic expression to the religious reasoning which has been the Indians' chief interest during millenniums, and still is so. But this tendency itself points to an unrest, which augurs the dissolution of the old natural relation between man and nature, individuals and kinship, that characterized the Indians of the Veda-period.

Evidently not all were satisfied in the harmonic nature-bound society which the bulk of Vedic songs presupposes. At an early date we find traces of outsiders who, without directly revolting against the common cult and culture, go their own ways. We also here have indications which point in the direction of the later practice of the Upanishads, of the trend of thought of the Yogin which is an inseparable element in the major part of the world of religious conception of the Indians, the world of ecstasy. The hymn X 136 seems to give an indication of such a holy man. His profusion of hair is mentioned, he carries fire and poison, carries heaven and earth. These holy men *(muni)* either have only the wind for a belt, or wear dirty yellow clothes, they follow the wind's track, when the gods have entered into them, »in holy ecstasy *(unmaditâ mauneyena)* we have ascended the winds, you mortal beings only see our bodies. The muni soars through space seeing all forms, he moves on the paths of Apsarases, Gandharvas, and wild animals. He knows the thoughts, is a sweet fascinating friend, together with Rudra he has drunk from the poison cup. — The picture in many ways seems to suit the innumerable holy men, who now, as in former days, crowd India. There is also something that leads us to think of a class of people, *Vrâtya*, of whom we have accounts, who, in rather suspect

company, went from place to place The Atharvaveda gives a picturesque description of such a man, who goes about in an ox carriage, accompanied by a *fille de joie*, a musician etc, to proclaim his beliefs and carry on his practices (XV. 1 ff) Theoretically they were people who originally belonged to the Brahman caste, but who had in many generations neglected the sacred duty to murmur the Rigvedic stanza (III, 62, 10), which is still the quintessence of the holy scriptures and is spoken every day. The Vedic ritual contains rules about these outsiders, who can be won back for the Brahmanic society, but usually they are considered as little respected musicians and dancers and other rabble When I mention them in this connection, it is because these chequered groups all belong to the process of dissolution which is one of the fundaments of the manifold tendencies which meet us in the literature of the Upanishads, though we only meet with them in its late offshoots

The word *Upanishad* is usually explained as a "sitting down with (a teacher)", a séance accordingly, and, secondarily, the esoteric teaching won by such instruction, perhaps more properly, however, as an equivalence of two substances or forces, thence a formula of equivalency, occult knowledge, and mutual dependency between two substances or forces (Schayer) However this may be, it is this mass of literature which is the real holy tradition of the Indians, the perpetual source of concentration and enrichment And in the western world too there are not a few who would subscribe to Schopenhauer's words, when he calls them "the most profitable and exalted lecture which is possible in the world, it has been my consolation in life, and will remain so in death"

The oldest of these texts are simply parts of the Brâhmanas, and others are attached to the Brâhmanas so that the starting point for understanding them must be the trend of thought prevailing in these ritual texts The perpetual pointing out of connections between the individual and the Universe in the literature

of the Brâhmanas, between Microcosmos and Macrocosmos, the perpetual stating of equivalent relations between different substances and forces, are very important for the understanding of the same trends in the Upanishads But there is, it is true, the decisive difference that what was then a link in ritual speculations and must be considered from the view-point of the cult, has here become a link in the spiritualizing of the old cult, wherewith the whole is drawn inwards, into the individual The cultic acts then came to concern stages in inner experiences, and only got their importance as mystic experiences, where time, space, contrasts and unity no more have their place, and the words therefore only can be used as negative statings of the contents one has been in contact with, and must eventually get new meanings

The dissolution of the old society, to which the Upanishads bear witness, was especially noticeable in the decreasing force and importance of the unity in kinship The individuals did not in the same degree as formerly become strong and rich through the connection with the other members of the kin, the common historical and cultic experiences were less intensively felt The differences in the fate of the individuals made itself noticed, when the kin as a whole was not the bearer of luck or adversity, the latter came to be felt as oppressive and unjust, and luck itself might seem futile and inane A pessimism, which we rarely meet in the many literary works of Vedic times, finds expression time after time Maitrayani Upanishad tells us about a king who seeks "the truth' and rejects all luck with the following words· "How can one take pleasure in a body that consists of bones, skin, sinews, marrow, and other accumulated evil-smelling, worthless parts, a body that is encumbered with passion, anger, desire, fear, etc , how take joy in a world, which is perishable like all its poor creatures. There have been great heroes and mighty kings who have had to leave all their glory in the lurch before the eyes of their relatives There have

been demigods and demons, whose destruction we have lived to see, great Oceans are dried up, mountains collapse, the Polar Star totters, the earth sinks, the gods are annihilated; I feel like a frog in a dried-up well (I 1—4) '

Such thoughts would have been quite unintelligible to the people of Vedic times, they are nearer akin to the fundamental feeling which has produced Buddha's teaching They are more negative than the usual course of thinking in the Upanishads, but they belong to the picture of the dissolution which resulted in the building of the new world which is that of the Upanishads, that which these thinkers formed within themselves, in their Ātman

With this transformation of the old society there also followed a recasting of the structure of the society, it could not any more rest fixed in the horizontal layers of the families, but a vertical construction in the life of the individual was formed, a division of the existence into four stages, which corresponded to the duties which the new feeling of life necessitated

It has been mentioned above that the young Hindu, if he belonged to one of the three uppermost castes, especially if he was of Brahman descent, had to go in for training with a Brahman, who took care of his religious instruction, and whom he lent a helping hand in the necessities of daily life Such a form of life, as *Brahmacârin*, was sometimes calculated to continue for twelve years Thereafter follows the position as house-father *(Gṛhastha)*, the important foundation of all stages and the real social life in the existence of the Indians, sometimes estimated at twenty five years In this span of time the birth of a son is looked upon as a paramount event, and when the son has grown up, his father can repair to the jungle, with or without his wife, there to spend the time in holy contemplation and self-concentration He is now a *Vânaprastha* and has thereby reached the highest point in his human development. Often several of these jungle dwellers live together in an *Āçrama* (the same word which

denotes the single stages) Still he belongs to the society he is born in, but there is a further-going possibility, *viz* to leave the fixed abode in the jungle, go out into the world as a vagrant beggar, who renounces all what life offers of agreeable. Such a *Sannyâsin* or *Parivrâjaka* is looked upon as being quite outside the world other people live in At his renunciation of the world ceremonies are performed similar to those performed in case of death, he does not any more belong to society.

Such appears the classical scheme of the Indian's stages of life As a matter of course only the second one can be obligatory, and the first has certainly been quite common Theoretically the order of succession was considered to be the most natural one, but there were also some who thought that one could reach the final renunciation from whichever stage one preferred The classical theory itself is not yet mentioned in the older Upanishads, but its practice is frequently mentioned and belongs to the life which these works presuppose It might be tempting to think of Buddhism and similar tendencies as the origin of the last, asocial stage, but it is not necessary, as this peregrinating holy man has been quite common at all times The collections of hymns and the Brâhmana-texts do not know anything about this doctrine of the four stages of life.

The fact that the Upanishads are so closely related to the ritual speculations of the Brâhmanas makes it evident that also their ways of thinking have their origin in the Brahman caste as having a kind of prerogative in the occupation with the deeper penetration into these matters This is also a *priori* the most likely assumption, in spite of all the evil things the Brahmans have been accused of on account of their arrogance, caste conceit, lust for power, etc India is, as a matter of fact, indebted to them for the most essential of her culture

Some people have nevertheless been of the opinion that the starting point of the thinking of the Upanishads should be sought in the warrior caste, probably wrongly, but it cannot be

denied that princes play a great and noble rôle in the discussions in which the Upanishads abound, the same, however, is also the case with some women. We here find ourselves in a truly free atmosphere

"Lead me from irreality to reality, lead me from darkness to light; lead me from death to immortality" says an old text, and it explains itself that the two first prayers in reality mean the same thing as the third Immortality was what one aspired to, but not in the popular naive sense One sought what lay behind the whole existence we know; the only thing to which we ventured to ascribe absolute reality; what could only be defined as the negation of everything that belonged to this world; what was denoted with the word *brahman*, a word of the neuter gender.

We meet, as mentioned above, with *brahman* in the Rigveda in the sense of the holy word, the powerful formula, thus also as the force that lies hidden in the word, the formula; but also in the sense of the mentality that filled those possessed by the holy word, of the intensifying of mental experiences which is the basis of religious inspiration and production. And just as it was Brahman that gave life and force to the word, it was also what gave the parts and the totality of the sacrificial act the power to work in the desired direction. As the sustaining principle in word and sacrificial act Brahman was, in the nature of things, the sustaining force in the whole order of the world, in *rita*, in the conformity to law, in all what was filled with life and activity. In everything it exists, but unseen, unintelligible through any function of sense and thought.

Only by means of images is it possible to clear up this relation between the world and Brahman. In the Chândogya Upanishad Aruni instructs his son and says to him "Put this salt into the water and come to me to-morrow." He does so, and the next day his father says to him "Fetch the salt you put into the water yesterday." The son feels for it, but cannot catch hold of

it 'Then taste the water here, how does it taste?" "It tastes salt' 'Then taste it in the midst of the vessel, how does it taste?' "Salt" "Taste the water on the other side, how is it?" "Salt" "Then put the vessel away and sit down with me Though the salt is in the water, you cannot feel it, but it is there nevertheless This subtle essence is the same of which the whole world consists, it is the only real thing, it is the self *(âtman)* That art thou

Thus sounds again and again the teaching these old thinkers try to find expression for Brahman is at the same time the greatest of all and the smallest, the most subtle of all Brahman is this whole world and it is my innermost I *(âtman)*, smaller than a rice-seed or a barley-seed or the kernel of a millet-seed, it is my innermost I greater than the earth, greater than space, greater than heaven, greater than these worlds, it is my innermost I, it is Brahman, into it I shall be dissolved when I leave this world

In these conceptions different tendencies find expression which, to our understanding, seem to contradict each other, but which, of course, at the stage of the history of thought here dealt with, in no way were felt as irreconcilable Logically consistent is the doctrine that Brahman is altogether something so absolutely different from our world that it is impossible to attempt even the weakest indication of a positive characterization This theory in some places comes sharply forward, but it thrives side by side with the doctrine that everything, that is the whole world, with its material elements, as well as with its organic beings, from the lowest to the highest stages, has its origin in Brahman, and at the end of the world-periods sinks back into Brahman This then, according to this conception, becomes the material cause of the evolution of the whole world And finally we get the conception that this Brahman manifests itself in a divine person as a periodical creator of the world the masculine noun Brahman, nominative *Brahmâ* This figure is met with in older and younger

literature, but it appears there curiously pale In the old cult he does not, practically, signify anything, in the Upanishads he is just as insignificant, in the great Epics he is often the one to whom the gods apply when they are in a pinch, and he then usually refers them to a helper, *e g* Vishnu In Buddhist lite-

Brahma

rature he is frequently mentioned, but plays, as is quite natural, a poor and sometimes slightly comical rôle in this distinctly atheistic religion The trinity Brahmâ, Vishnu, and Çiva, as periodical Creator, Sustainer and Destroyer of the world, has never had any real importance

This creative activity Brahma has taken over from Prajâpati,

the great God Creator of the Brâhmana literature, who also occasionally acts in this rôle in the Upanishads, where he often is a much estimated teacher in the science of Brahman In the ritual literature his creative activity is connected with the idea of the creating glow, the rutting preceding the action which is expressed through the word *tapas*, which is also used about the glow that is the result of a violent asceticism, significantly enough the denomination of two conflicting mental states, but due to the origin of both from the exaltation, the ecstasy which is common to rut and asceticism Time after time the Brâhmanas say that Prajâpati desired "I will propagate myself, I will become multiplied", then he produced glowing rut *(tapo'tapvata)*, and after having produced this state, he created these worlds In consequence of the character of these works it goes without saying that the creating act most frequently results in various ritual phenomena, but principally it is the notion of the rutty glow as the creating factor And this ecstatic experience is one of the characteristics of the brahman-filled saint

One text describes how everything emanates from the Imperishable as the thread from the spider, and continues "through *tapas* Brahman increases", but it is of no use to examine what is said about these mutually conditioning and conditioned factors, for in the Upanishads there is unceasingly a play on the psychological phenomena, by the help of which the descriptions of the mental experiences, which are the contents of these works, are built up The multiplicity, which becomes the result of the desire which Prajâpati or Brahmâ feels, is in the Upanishads turned inwards, so that the world is formed in the mystic's own soul, for here we have to do with real mysticism, as it is experienced in the soul which is one of the results of the thinking of the Upanishads The trend of thought in the Upanishads is namely first and foremost based on psychology, and it is therefore of importance to point out that it is just in this class of writings that the conception of a soul evolves, and this in a way which

bears witness to the fact that the connection with Brahman, with the All-life, at once is given One reflected on sensation, on the organs of sense and functions of sense, without differentiating organ and function, which are often combined in the word *prâna*, lifespirit One enumerated eye, ear, mind *(manas)*, voice, breath, and often widened the series with phenomena such as tongue, hands, skin, or with smell, taste, feeling, and cognition, etc, but the first five are generally what constitutes the living, animated human being And then we are told that these functions are fighting for the leadership, Prajâpati assigns the price to that organ which the body with greatest difficulty can do without, and as now voice, eye, ear, or mind leave the body, this continues its existence as respectively mute, blind, deaf, and foolish, but when *prâna*, breath, begins to leave it, it tears the other ones along, and they hurry to allot the price to prâna The animal spirit is life, most frequently used as a symbol of Brahman, and it becomes the central one among the functions of the individual; this conception goes together with the efforts to find a principle behind all sensation, a partner in every function of the senses As *Âtman*, the I, says, in one place. "When one speaks by the voice, when one breathes by *prâna*, when one sees by the eye, when one hears by the ear, when one feels by the skin, when one thinks by *manas*, when one inhales by apâna, when seed is emitted by the organs of sex, who then am I?" In another place the answer runs "I am the breath of life, and the I of cognition."

Behind each function is sought the active principle that works in and with the function, but remains, even though the functions are stopped. As it is said "When one thus does not see, one is still seeing though one does not see what is to be seen, for to the seeing subject there is no interruption in the seeing since he is not destroyed, but there is nothing different from him that he can see." -- The soul is, the same teacher maintains, the subject of the seeing, of hearing, of the thought, and of the cognition,

and is just therewith himself uncognizable. — And its identity with Brahman, the All-life, is easily understood through the rôle which conceptions, such as life and lifespirit, played at its formation, and was fixed in a common designation of both individual soul and Brahman, viz. *Atman*, which originally means "breath", but more and more becomes the expression of the central principle in the individuum, the I, the soul.

If one tries to understand how this *Atman*, this I, is constituted, one finds a natural image in the soul's state when the individual is awake, is dreaming, and rests in a dreamless sleep. The dream signifies something intermediate between this world and that beyond, and the soul perceives both these forms of existence during sleep When it goes to sleep, says the Brihadâranyaka Upanishad, it takes the material from this world and builds itself a new one from it There are no waggons, no team, or ways, but it creates them itself, there is neither joy, nor lust, but it creates them itself, there are neither waters, lotus ponds, nor rivers, but it creates them itself, for it is a creator It leaves behind all that belongs to the body and contemplates the sleeping senses without sleeping itself, moving up and down in dream it forms, as God, many shapes, now it is as if it amuses itself with women, now it laughs and now it experiences terror As a great fish now swims along one shore, now along the other, the soul moves between two states, the world of dreams and the waking world And just as an eagle, after having flown around in space, tired beats his wings together and turns down to its nest, thus the soul hastens to the state in which it sleeping does not feel any desires nor has any dreams. In the dream it has felt itself as a god or a king, and has had the sensation· I am this whole world But here is a state without desire, without evil, without fear, just as he, who is embraced by a beloved woman, has no sense for anything exterior or anything interior, thus the bodily I, when embraced by the spiritual I, has no sense of anything exterior or anything interior. Here there is no more anything

that is called father, mother, gods, Vedas, thief, embryo-killer, beggar-monk, ascetic Neither good nor evil sticks to the soul, for it is above all cares of the heart All the functions of the senses are stopped, but the sensing subject is not destroyed, only there is nothing else left that could be sensed; where everything has become unified with the I, there is no possibility for a cognizing function

These reflections on dreams and dreamless sleep give an intelligible picture of the soul and the possibilities awaiting it during its different states of existence in the cosmic stages in which it is tumbled about And the dreamless sleep in later Indian thinking becomes one of the most frequently used pictures for the emancipated soul's merging into Brahman, or its "existence" when it has recognized its identity with Brahman, according to the explanation the Upanishads were later made the object of.

How the knowledge of the relation to Brahman, from which the soul illusoriously thinks itself different, is won, can perhaps most easily be illustrated by indicating the motives in the teaching which Yâjñavalkya gives one of his wives, who wants to follow him to his third stage of life in the jungle, renouncing what he will leave her, as riches cannot help her to immortality He begins (in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad) by explaining to her that, when one loves one's consort, one's children, goods, cattle, Brahmans and other classes, the worlds, the gods, the Vedas, all the beings, it is not for the sake of all these things themselves, but for the sake of one's own self, for one's Atman's sake, that one loves all this, because they are in fact identical with one's own I (we can e g think of a feeling such as compassion) It is one's own I, Atman, one must see in all, through it one knows all If one does not look on all things in that way, they will repudiate one's self

Just as one cannot seize the tones of a luth outside of it, but only by seizing the luth or the luthplayer; (thus all things are only seized in seizing the I, which is the same in them all). — As

smoke-clouds spread to all sides from a pyre which is ignited with wet wood, thus are exhaled from this great being (Brahman) all Vedas, all sacrifices, this and the yonder world, and all beings

Yâjñavalkya goes on to illustrate his fundamental thought in other images in conformity with those schematically referred to above, and he finishes with a saying, which horrifies his wife After death there is no consciousness But he makes his thought clear by continuing »As long as there is as it were a duality, then one can see, smell, taste, talk to, think on, feel and apprehend the other, but when all has become one's own I *(Atman)*, wherewith and whom should he then see, smell, taste, etc The I (Âtman) through which he apprehends all this, through which should he apprehend it? This Âtman can only be signified through negations; this I is incomprehensible, etc How should one apprehend the apprehender himself? This is indeed immortality "

What is here mentioned as real immortality is covered by the conceptions one made oneself about the final emancipation And this thought presupposes clearly that death does not bring this emancipation, and therein lies as a necessary consequence that the individual souls undergo a series of forms of existence before emancipation comes This doctrine of *transmigration*, which to us is insolubly connected with Indian religion, is not met with in the Vedic hymns, no more in the Brâhmana literature, where there is, true enough, sometimes mention of a "repeated dying" (punarmrityu), but this is only a weak indication in the direction of the continued series of existences In the later literature the thought is so obvious that there is never a question about its origin, and in the Upanishad texts it is also indicated, though in a much less systematic form than later on

In connection with the description of the soul's experiences in dream and in dreamless sleep, we are told about the death of the human being which has not reached emancipation In death the I is accompanied by the life-spirits (the organs of sense), and it is

further provided with its knowledge, its acts, and consciousness from its last existence. As a caterpillar, when it has reached the end of a straw, contracts itself and continues by a new way, so the I drops its previous body with the defective knowledge connected with it, and builds for itself a new and more beautiful form in the world of the ancestors, or of the Gandharvas, of Prajâpati, of Brahmâ, of men, or among other beings.

And then it goes on. "As a man acts, thus he becomes; he who performs good acts, becomes good; he who performs bad acts, becomes bad." — Here we have, in all generality, the thought of continued existences, but also, what is the most important, the addition that it is the acts that condition the form of the coming existence. We must not, however, forget that all this is only valid on a lower stage in the development that the continued existences make possible For he who has realized that the whole world is Brahman, and that every single soul is fully and wholly identical with the "soul of the Universe", for him every talk of the soul's wanderings is purely illusory. He knows that nothing is real but Brahman, and Brahman he is himself But to all others the doctrine of the wanderings of the soul is a most serious matter and has always had the firmest grip on the Indian's life of thinking and feeling, as the only possible explanation of dissimilarity, of the apparent injustice in the individuals' circumstances It is the doctrine of *karman*, the act, which with infrangible consistence decides the individual's state in coming existences, which gave the Indian a plausible justification for the fate he is subjected to it is the law which in the Indian's eyes is just as evident and inevitable as any law of nature we acknowledge. We found it implied in what is said above about the soul's migration to a new life But still it is something new to these old thinkers, something about which not everybody ought to be informed. One of these wise men asks Yâjñavalkya what becomes of man at death, and Yâjñavalkya takes him aside, for the question must not be answered in the hearing of others;

then the two go aside, and "it was *karman* they talked about; one *becomes good through good and bad through bad karman*".

This teaching is in itself revolutionizing, it makes worship of gods and sacrificial cult worthless, but it won an all-overshading influence on the Indian's thinking and feeling in life. Already in the Rigveda (X 14, 8) we read that the dead was accompanied by his sacrifices and his good deeds, but in the formulation of the Upanishads the meaning became quite a different one. As an explanation of all "injustice" in this world one now had the consciousness that life for the individual was shaped in accordance with what he, in earlier existences, had stored of good and bad acts, and the whole circle of existences rolling round since eternity *(samsâra)* acquired a power over the minds which made the single life strangely valueless, seen in the great continuity And it thus contributed to evoke the often vague, passive submission to fate, which stamps so much of India's spiritual life Only one existence becomes decisive, that in which one wins deliverance from this apparently endless round, that in which one, through instruction and self-concentration, obtains the realization of the identity of the I and Brahman, this realization is all through the Upanishads fastened in terms which the Indians consider as expressions of the highest insight, and which also are so according to the given premisses "That art thou", — "I am Brahman", — "The I *(âtman)* is Brahman", — "Thy soul is the inner ruler, the immortal", — "The spirit that is found here in man and yonder in the sun, it is one and the same", - "Insight is the root of everything, Brahman is insight", "Brahman is bliss", "Brahman is truth, insight without end", — "This spirit is Brahman", — "Brahman is the whole world", — "Only One, without another"

In the Taittiriya Upanishad we hear how Bhrigu asks his father Varuna to teach him what Brahman is The father directs him to seek that from which all beings have their origin, that through which they live, and that into which they again sink back, for that is Brahman The son comes to the result that

Brahman is the food we subsist on. But the father advices him to practice *tapas* (glow, asceticism), for Brahman is tapas. Then Bhrigu gradually comes to the result that Brahman is life-spirit, that Brahman is thought, that Brahman is knowledge, that Brahman is bliss This thought, that Brahman can be determined by a series of identifications of a more or less intimate kind, returns again and again and takes its form from the theory that Brahman is surrounded by a series of covers, which we must remove, one after the other, in order to fathom what the innermost Brahman really is. It is evident that this course of procedure is the same as the well-known way in which the Yogin, in his concentration, tries to remove one stratum after the other of the hindrances that veil the object of his contemplation until he at last reaches the point in his concentration when object and subject merge into one Again and again we are directed to make the I, *âtman*, the object of sight, hearing, thinking and concentration, for therewith we have reached knowledge of all

Here we touch one side of Indian religion, the importance of which nobody has later on been able to overrule, but whose rôle in the understanding of the Upanishads has not always been clearly seen. As to the younger Upanishads there is surely nobody who would deny the *Yoga theory* and practice as essential, but much of the theory of the older ones is clearly understood when we keep in mind the development which truly enough gets its classical expression in the Yoga system, but which can also be traced outside of it in manifold influences. When we leave the oldest prosaic Upanishads, which still keep in the closest connection to the Brâhmana texts, which are peculiar to the Vedic school they belong to, we have to do with tracts which have a more independent position, even though they are also bound to one school or another within Vedic tradition It is the same fundamental conceptions which make up the contents and chiefly the same knowledge which one seeks to reach But one dwells more on the ways which might be thought to lead to the goal,

than on the goal itself, the delivering knowledge And one enjoys juggling, often in a paradoxical way, with the most different symbols of Brahman, which are sometimes placed above, sometimes below it, the light being thrown on Brahman from the most different sides, and showing new aspects each time Thus the metrical Mundaka Upanishad operates with the conceptions Brahman, purusha (the spiritual I), and akshara (the Imperish able), which, each in itself, are the origins of a series of forms of existence, are apprehended through Brahman-knowledge, are the aim of meditation and are put in surprising, mutual relations Essential is that these conceptions assume a momentary form according to the upâdhi they are bound up with, *upâdhi* is all that stands in relation to a thing without essentially belonging to it, and everything can eventually become upâdhi to the Brahman which is illusorically connected with all phenomena in the world The relation between the three factors must consequently change according to the encumberments which are attributed to them at the moment

If one asks what one must know in order to know the whole world, all the sacred and profane science, the Vedas, as well as the disciplines which are utilized for its explanation, are rejected. The Imperishable cannot be reached through any form of knowledge, only by being understood as the origin of all beings. As Brahman it is the starting point for food, and therefrom are produced life-spirit, thought, reality, the real worlds, and what is imperishable in the acts But those, who consider themselves wise, they tumble around within the illusion as blind beings led by a blind When they have enjoyed the fruit of their good acts then they return again to this or to an inferior world. For just as sparks come out in thousands from a fire, thus all beings are born from the Imperishable and again re-enter it

From Purusha are born the spirit of life, thought, and all organs, space, air, fire, water, and the earth, that supports all, and

at the same time he is the inner I of all beings, for the soul is all this. Which purpose do these and similar enumerations serve, which remind us of a series of evolution? They quite simply indicate the veils one must look through in order to reach the knowledge of Brahman. It is the Yogin's training which shall lead him from one exterior layer to the nearest within, until he covers all the way to the object of his meditation It is said (II, 2, 3): "Seize the great weapon of the Upanishads as a bow, lay the arrow sharpened through concentration on it, bend it with the thought exclusively directed towards concentration in Brahman, and pierce the Imperishable as a target". If this contemplation is realized, one shakes off good and evil deeds and enters into unity with the highest.

It is evident that the acts are quite without importance to him who has reached so far in concentration In reality this does not mean that he now can commit the vilest misdeeds; he may theoretically do so, but in practise it will be out of question For, beside this way of the Yogin to knowledge of the Brahman runs another way, that of renunciation. He who feels desire, he is born again and again, he who is without desire, his wishes melt away already here on Earth. It is not instruction, thinking, or learning which teach us to know the I, it only reveals itself to him whom it choses itself — This last statement is clear since it is our own I which the question refers to. Those who have fixed their aim on the understanding of the Upanishads, and who have purified their interior through renunciation through Yoga, are delivered at death in Brahman and win immortality. He, who knows the highest Brahman, *he becomes Brahman* — The goal is, as the last words show, the same as in the oldest texts, but the underlining of renunciation and Yoga, as the way to this goal, gives the thought a new turn And it is not unnatural that in these later Upanishads one often finds a preference for defining Brahman with masculine nouns, like Purusha (as also Atman), which, giving the Absolute a colouring with

a shade of personification, must act attractively on a Yogin's thinking On the more elementary stages of a Yogin's training, it is most often personified conceptions of god he uses as material for his exercises, his private deity *(ishtadevatâ)* is his favourite object of meditation We shall therefore often find an inclination to dwell on such aspects of the unpersonified Brahman as are connected with conceptions that do not appear too abstract As a philosophical system the Yoga doctrine has always been theistic

Systems of religious philosophy

In the Upanishads so many motives of psychological development are pointed out that we cannot wonder at the great number of schools that originated from those thoughts which, often indistinct and hesitating, often with profound consistency, were devised in these old tracts We can also trace the tendencies to many of those systems of religious philosophy which occupied the minds in mutual formation or mutual polemics during the two to three thousand years elapsed since then We are unfortunately not able to follow the history of the individual systems in detail until the teaching of a school becomes fixed in a series of short sentences *(sûtra)*, and this does not seem to have taken place before the last centuries B C and the first centuries A D, but then in a way which bears witness to a previous philosophical development during centuries These sentences were provided with often highly needed commentaries by the school's masters, which not rarely differ strongly from one another, as the often enigmatic sentences could, without difficulty, be interpreted from subjective points of view These commentaries were then again interpreted in sub-commentaries, each commentary might solve some difficulties in the original work, but contained at the same time new doubtful questions, which must again be solved, and often

the development gradually finished in a scholastic treatise distinct in form and contents, which often is a severe trial to our understanding.

Among the most important systems there are two which are directly connected with Vedic tradition: the *Pûrvamîmâmsâ* and the *Uttaramîmâmsâ* (usually called *Vedânta*) The first of these two, mutually supplementary, doctrines deals with the methods by the help of which one could, on the foundation of the scattered and often conflicting indications of the Brâhmanas, arrive at precise rules for the sacrifice *(karman)* These rules of interpretation were necessary for the sacrificial techniques, and did besides play a decisive rôle also outside the circle of sacrifice-theologians, *viz* for the science of law It is significant for the Indian conception of religion that this philosophical school, in the nature of things the most "orthodox" of all, is decidedly atheistic. For it maintains that the holy tradition, the Veda, has existed since eternity, and is only at the beginning of each world-period known by intuition by seeers *(rishis)*, who have thus no more created it than any god has. In the same way all words, all sounds, have a latent existence before and after their actual production, and they have, since eternity, been connected with what they signify The importance of this philosophy became greater for the speculation on epistemology than for the religious enrichment, and among its adherents are some of the sharpest brains in India, or probably in the world, but this side of Mîmâmsâ is more at its place in a history of philosophy. For the history of religion the working out of the karman-doctrine, we here meet with, is important Every act bears its fruit, and acts further as something invisible *(adrishta)*, as a new coming factor *(apûrva)* which is decisive for the individual's future fate, until it is exhausted, whereby man should have been released from transmigration. But as one normally commits oneself to new actions, again and again, one is whirled round in transmigration until the saving knowledge is won However, this knowledge is

of no interest to the Mîmâmsâ philosophy, but is the chief aim of the later Mîmâmsâ, the *Vedânta*

Vedânta is in India a common denomination of the Upanishads; the word means "the end of Veda", the last part or fulfilment, and is used in a more restricted sense about the systematic philosophy which, at the present day, is the really dominating way of thinking in India, that which a great majority of the religiously and philosophically interested sections of the people confesses The chief aim of this tenor of the mind is the interpretation of the teaching of the Upanishads, the systematizing of the trends of thought which penetrate this last part of the holy Veda. It goes without saying that here the most daring attempts at interpretation have free play, and it is not to be wondered that the different interpreters sometimes are in sharp opposition to each other. It was the duty of him who wanted to pose as master within the Vedânta philosophy, to comment the Upanishads, the Bhagavadgîtâ, and the system of sentences (*sûtra*), often explicable in many ways, in which *Bâdarâyana* had established the interpretation of the Upanishads, which was valid in his time (perhaps not before the second century A D), with polemics against differing interpretations Among the many independent founders of schools within Vedânta the most interesting is Çamkara (7th or 8th century), whose "absolute monism" is the most frequently accepted form of Vedânta, (he is influenced by Buddhist relativism), Râmânuja (11th century), whose "qualified monism" leaves room for a certain personal relation of devotion to the deity; and Madhva (13th century), whose "dualism" combines ontological pluralism with functional monism; this last school is much less wide-spread than the other ones

The fact that Çamkara dominates the later religious thinking in India does not, of course, mean that his understanding of Bâdarâyana's sûtras is right We have reason to believe that other interpreters grasp the fundamental conception of the school better, *viz* that the souls enjoy an eternal existence as parts of

Brahman, and together with the material world constitute Brahman's "body" Their deliverance from samsâra consists in their eternal union with the All-soul, Brahman-Âtman, which is also the material cause of the whole world that emerges from Brahman. On the other hand it cannot be denied that much of Çamkara's doctrine is already implicated in the Upanishads. The individual souls are, each in itself, fully and entirely identical with Brahman, and the deliverance consists in the knowledge that the whole world, the transmigration of the souls, is only an illusion, *Mâyâ*, which prevents the souls from apprehending Brahman as reality, thought, and bliss *(sat, cit, ânanda)* and its own identity with it It is as when we in darkness assume that a rope lying on the ground is a snake, and acts under that assumption, have we once apprehended the real state of things, the illusion is at an end for ever The reason for our belief that we live in a manifold world is the premordial error *(avidvâ* – not knowing) the souls are encumbered with, it is a potency *(çakti)* in Brahman which veils the pure intellect so that we consider ourselves as limited, acting, and for good and evil suffering individuals, while Brahman alone exists Beside this veiling potency, there is found in Brahman an expanding, evolving potency that shapes the evolution of the world, which to us has empirical reality until the absolute knowledge has been won and the whole illusion disappears This *Avidvâ* can neither be defined as being nor as not being, but disappears when Brahman is known and the soul becomes one with Brahman.

Before we reach this absolute knowledge, we have to turn in adoration to a qualified Brahman, which is still just as illusory as everything else in the empirical world, but, like many other conceptions of gods, has its importance for those who are not ripe for the real understanding of the world's illusory character. Thanks to this distinction between the highest and the lower, with attributes provided, Brahman, Çamkara succeeds in explaining all the passages on which he builds his system, in a

way that lets each trend of thought come to its right. Beside this his very extensive commentary on Bâdarâyana is to a great extent devoted to polemics against other explanations, and almost a quarter of Bâdarâyana's work is directed against the system called Sâmkhya and tries to show that Sâmkhya's attempt to support its theory about the primeval matter on passages in the scriptures, is inadmissible

This *Sâmkhya philosophy* has excercised an, in many ways thorough-going, influence on the Indians' way of thinking, also

Kapila, the founder of Samkhya

on that side which found expression in Vedânta Sâmkhya teaches the existence of two principles, distinctly separated from each other, the souls *(purusha)* and matter. The souls are spiritual principles, innumerable, eternal, and in reality quite untouched by matter, one soul belonging to each individual. The primeval matter *(prakriti)* consists of three constituents *(guna)*, which, in varying mixture, constitute all that is material, including the finest functions of cognition, *viz* everything except the souls. These gunas are *sattva*, the light, bright, resplendent, intelligent, good, *rajas*, whose intrinsic nature is energy, action, passion, and

tamas, the retarding, heavy, languid These three constituents are, through their different relations, decisive for everything which consists of matter, in the primeval matter they are in equipoise, but when the equilibrium is disturbed, there are developed from the primeval matter, first the psychic' phenomena the substance of thinking *(buddhi)*, the substance of subjectivity *(ahamkâra)*, and the organ of thought *(manas)*, with the other ten organs of sense (organs of cognition and acting), parallel with these the five subtle elements, and from them the five ordinary elements (earth, water, fire, air, and the material space, frequently uncorrectly translated 'ether')

Outside this evolution stand the souls, eternal and unchangeable, without any quality whatever, all that we call "psychic' phenomena are only based on purely material organs, whose functions are reflected in the souls, and thus conceived as conscious, so that the souls think themselves feeling, willing, and acting This illusory connection with matter is the reason of the souls' (illusory) suffering and acting, which lasts until the soul has apprehended its absolute difference from matter and therewith won deliverance from transmigration through the many forms of existence

The cause of the evolution of matter is just the consideration for the salvation of the souls, as the milk unconsciously flows from the cow, in order to help the calf to grow, thus the primeval matter develops itself, in order to help the soul to salvation And as a dancer, when she has shown herself to the spectators, leaves the scene, thus the material world sinks back into the primeval matter, when it has shown the soul its essence — These two images from the oldest existing systematic Sâmkhyawork (Kârika 57 and 59) give an amusing illustration of the relation between matter and soul There is no god who directs the workings of matter, Samkhya is atheistic, it is the law bound development aiming at the salvation of the souls which is the basis of the doctrine of salvation in this school In its wanderings

before deliverance, the soul is accompanied by a subtle body, consisting of the substance of thought, the organ of subjectivity, the organ of thinking, the ten organs of sense and action, and the five subtle elements which constitute this so-called *lingaçarîra*, which body is not annihilated at death, but is bearer of the sum of the actions *(karman)* which decides the soul's (illusory) form for existence in the world. This evolution of the primordial matter is repeated in every world-period, at the conclusion of which the whole series of stages in the development sinks back into the primeval matter, and thus the soul obtains a period of rest, until the development is again set in motion.

Already in the Upanishads we find hints of the motives here sketched The name with which this philosophy is most frequently designated, *satkâryavâda* (the theory of the reality of the products) means that all products have potential existence in their material cause, and this is akin to the Upanishad-thought that one *e g* in a simple lump of clay recognizes everything that is made of clay The many shapes in which clay appears are only words, pure notions, in reality they are and remain clay and nothing else. Also the doctrine of the three *gunas* we find indicated in the old texts, as also some technical terms already occur in the oldest Upanishads, and turn up, to a great extent, in the younger. The series of development we learn to know in Sâmkhya has numerous parallels, and it can scarcely be doubted that here we have to do with theories which are explained through the Yogin's attempt to reach in self-concentration to the kernel in the world of phenomena, as has been mentioned above in connection with similar conceptions in the Upanishads. The aim is by removing, one after the other, the layers which veil the fundamental principle, to be placed face to face with it and finally to be merged entirely in it Thus one passed, from the elements of the gross material world through the subtle elements and through the different "psychical" stages, to the final goal of meditation.

In the different Indian systems it is most frequently know-

ledge which is considered as the means of salvation, insight of the I's identity with Brahman, or of the soul's absolute difference from the world of matter, etc, but we must not forget that here there is not first and foremost the question of a knowledge to be won through studying the texts As a rule a teacher will be necessary, which is connected with the fact that the knowledge has a practical side, and this last one most frequently takes the form of meditation, of a real penetration into the way and aims of insight

In order to lead to the goal, such a meditation requires a systematic training, and it is just a system which is akin to Sâmkhya that first and foremost occupies itself with these questions. As a systematic philosophy *Yoga* is to be considered as a theistic counterpart to Sâmkhya, whose theoretical conception is mainly and largely accepted, while the conception of an eternal and "almigthy" God, which is so useful in the exercise of the training of meditation, is loosely knitted to the other contents But Yoga is very much older than the systematic formulation of the theory; we have indeed already in the Rigveda traces of conceptions which lead directly to the type of Yogins we know in our own days God is in Yoga a soul, whose organ of thought *(citta)* only consists of the finest of matter's constituents *(sattva)*, therewith he distinguishes himself from all the souls implied in samsâra, but as the released soul is entirely released from the illusory connection with even the finest part of the world of matter, God is in reality an inferior being in comparison with the souls that are saved through realizing their absolute difference from matter

Yoga, which in itself means training, effort, and which also in some popular statements is used about the soul's union with God, is in the systematical philosophy defined as "suppression of the fluctuations of the organ of thought *(citta)*", wherewith is obtained that "the soul rests in itself while it elsewhere seems to be identical with these fluctuations". What Yoga means by

the fluctuations of thought is "right understanding, wrong understanding, verbal fictions, sleep, and recollection" And these fluctuations are suppressed, "partly through methodical exercise, partly through renunciation". These four sentences from the Yoga sûtra give the foundation of Yoga

In this connection it is of importance to state that the much mentioned, and also frequently practised violent, and often disgusting, examples of self-tortures have no sanction in the classical Yoga doctrine This teaches, as preparatory stages, a series of ethical conditions, which must be fulfilled "not to take life, to speak the truth, not to steal, not to live an unchaste life, and not to own anything" These commands, which indeed coincide with so many ethical systems, are unconditionally valid in all circumstances Thereafter come inculcations of "purity, contentment, asceticism *(tapas)*, study of the Veda, and devotion to God" Then follows teaching about the different postures to be used during the meditation, where the carriage of the body should be at the same time "firm and comfortable" One sees that here everything aims at creating a quiet foundation for the meditation and at a steady control over both body and mind, which are the preliminary of the real exercises of concentration Important is the minute teaching about regulating the breathing, a subject which has in our days come to play a not unimportant rôle in the treatment of nervous troubles

All these arrangements, to whose successful performance are joined promises of various supernatural faculties, are however to be considered as preliminary stages Now one has to withdraw the mind *(citta)* from the outer objects of sense and fix it on one point *(dhâranâ)*, then to keep it fixed on this one single object, undisturbed and unshaken in a continued identical meditation *(dhyânâ)*, and finally to realize a conception which reflects the object and wholly gives up its own essence *(samâdhi)*. Has the Yogin advanced so far, the most astonishing results appear He knows the past and the future; he understands the speech of

animals, he knows all his previous forms of existence, he can read the thoughts of others, he can make himself invisible, he can move through the air, etc And as a crowning of the work follows the final deliverance through realization of the soul's being untouched by the material world and consequently of its absolute existence *(kaivalya)*, the pure intelligence.

Yoga has not had less influence than Sâmkhya on the other systems of religious philosophy, practically speaking they all acknowledge it as a real form of religious experience And even the systems merely dealing with logic and epistemology, and the systems of the philosophy of nature based on theories about atoms reckon with Yoga as a matter of course Above all, of course, the popular religious currents are full of the most phantastic descriptions of the practice and theory of the Yogin We meet with them in the Mahâbhârata, in the more sectarian Purânas, in the later Upanishads In the common literature of fairy-tales the Yogin is a well-known, but not always respected, person, and it cannot be denied that it is often outward effect which is aimed at, as when we in the India of our days see the (wrongly) so-called fakirs lying on a couch of iron nails, standing with one arm raised and not yielding to the temptation to lower it (as long as it still can be moved), lying in the scorching sun surrounded by flaming fires, hanging with the head down, or what else a baffled tourist may come across The real Yogin does not, of course, take to such devices, he is quite disinterested in causing a sensation and earning a couple of pence through his artifices, however imposing in itself as an expression of self-control. Yoga can be of help in every form of the quest for salvation, in the more popular systems it is not the absolute emancipation which is aimed at, but the union with God Here the aim of the meditation is to contemplate God, and the many preparations indicated above serve to further the receptability for the ecstasy in which the union with God takes place.

In this connection it is scarcely required to deal with others of the philosophic doctrines of India, though the religious side is rarely quite absent It might rather be of interest to mention such an old system as that of the materialists (the *Cârvâka* or *Lokâyata* doctrine). While the other systems, atheistic as well as theistic, are considered as orthodox, the materialists (as the Buddhists) are placed outside "positive" philosophy; and that does not need to astonish us, seeing what their antagonists tell us about their teaching

Things have, the materialists say, their cause entirely in their own nature There is no heaven, no salvation, no retaliation beyond Acts do not set fruit Sacrificial priests, ascetics, Veda-knowers, are only impostors, who try to find a living in this way. "If the sacrificed animal goes to heaven, why does one not sacrifice one's own father?" Only the four elements do exist, from them is produced the spiritual factor, the soul, in the same way as the intoxicating faculty of wine from the ferment, and it disappears with them A soul which survives the body cannot be traced. Lust, *e g*, in embracing beautiful women is man's highest aim. One has only to evade the drawbacks connected with lust, as one tries, when eating fish, to get rid of the bones and scales With "hell" we have only to understand such nuisances as the pain enjoyments may produce, with "God" we understand the mightiest king at any time, and with "redemption" the annihilation of the body. The body is the "soul" The only valid means of knowledge is immediate perception through the senses. The result of this way of thinking is thus. "Enjoy life with due consideration to the disagreeable things such a life may bring about," and "We must accept the teaching of the materialists if we are anxious for men's welfare".

It would be wrong to say that such antireligious sayings have nothing to do with a treatise on India's religious history, on the contrary they teach us a good deal about the Indians' way of thinking.

Jainism

Beside these and other systems of religious philosophy, which, with the exception of materialism, were recognized as orthodox, even how much they might deviate from the tradition contained in the holy literature, there grew up two powerful religious branches, which were destined to obtain great importance in the future. One of them, Jainism, has — in contrast to Buddhism —

Jaina prophets

had to be satisfied with setting the minds in motion in India only. When we think of the interest which the Upanishads, Buddhism, and Hinduism have raised and still raise in the West, one might indeed believe that Jainism was more pronounced Indian than the other religions, since it has not had a similar international influence. That is, however, scarcely the case; the thing is that the others have only aquired their position outside of India through becoming the object of an often almost un-

noticeable assimilation of thoughts, which has made it acceptable to non-Indians. To such an adaptation Jainism has never tempted, not because it is more truly Indian, but because it is remarkably devoid of emotional sides that are capable of captivating receptive minds.

Jainism probably goes back to the 8th century B.C., but the historical renewer of the religion, Mahâvîra, lived in the 6th cent B C. The name Jainism is derived from *jina* "victor", a designation of everybody who has obtained deliverance The prophets of the doctrine themselves are called *tirthamkaras*, an adherent of jina is called *jaina*, just as an adherent of Buddha is called *bauddha* The last in the series of prophets was Vardhamâna (Mahâvîra "the great hero"), according to the legend a son of King Siddhârtha and his consort Triçalâ At the age of 28 years he lost his parents, and thereby felt himself freed from living in the home. After having, for two years, requested and at last received his brother's permission to become a wandering beggar monk, he left his wife and daughter, donned a monk's dress, and gave himself up to meditation near his birthplace Vaiçâli After 13 months of ascetic exercises he started on his way, naked, endured all kinds of derision, subjected himself to mortifications and self-concentration, and after the lapse of twelve years reached the delivering knowledge Until his death (ca 470 B C) he lived as a wandering teacher, venerated by numerous disciples

His monks, who are still numerous in India, are divided into two sects, *çvetâmbara* "white-dressed", and *digambara* "airdressed", *i e* naked It is especially to the former branch that we owe our knowledge of the doctrine The Jainist tradition does not go back to Mahâvîra's time, but was put together in the 6th century A.D. It is written in Prakrit, and it was only later on that one changed over to the use of Sanskrit like most other systems that aimed at influencing the spiritual life of the learned world.

However, Jainism does not only address itself to a world of monks; it numbers still many adherents among lay people, who do not have to subject themselves to the demands of poverty and sexual abstinence, but who in other respects hold the same views as the monks. These people have, as is always the case in India, the task of supporting the order of monks, and thus they acquire merit favourable for a future transmigration, at the same time as they form the social foundation of the holy men's existence

The conception of the karman doctrine in Jainism is peculiar, karman (the result left by the acts of the individual) is a matter which penetrates the soul as particles of dust adhere to a body smeared with oil. This connection between karmic matter and the soul has no beginning, and only ends at the salvation. This matter, which enters the soul, is, or becomes, karman (it is perhaps better to put it thus), as it, with regard to nature and duration, is determined through the acts which are responsible for the matter's entering the soul All acts involve karmic matter which conditions the coming form of existence. Gradually, as the karmic matter is exhausted, new matter arises And thus the soul wanders from existence to existence Some karmic matter obstructs the soul's insight and faculties, others produce desire, others again decide the nature and duration of the coming existence, etc

These matters belong to, or constitute, the fifth of those substances Jainism reckons with· the material side *(pudgala)* of existence consists of an endless number of atoms, which are characterized by touch, smell, taste, and colour, and which can combine and thus shape themselves into all the appearances of the material world of matter, as the bodies belonging to the souls in the worlds of hells, animals, men, or heavens.

The four other material substances are: space, wherein everything is contained, substrata for movement and rest; and, finally time. Nos. 2 and 3 are difficult to connect with any conceptions; they are in themselves neither movement nor rest, but only the

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condition for the possibility that anything can move or come to rest, as the water is the condition for the swimming of the fishes, or the earth for the tired wanderers' ability to lie down to rest, they are called *dharma* and *adharma*, respectively, without any traceable connection with the usual meanings of these words.

Beside these five material substances *(ajîva)* stands the spiritual, *viz.* the souls *(jîva)*; these are innumerable, in reality they are provided with many qualities, such as omniscience, bliss, etc., but these make themselves only feebly noticeable, as long as the souls are under the influence *(âçrava*, in its verbal sense) of the world of matter. The souls are neither of endless extent, nor of the size of atoms, as in other systems, but take their size from the body which is their abodes in the different existences Not only gods, men, and animals have a soul, but also plants, fire, air, water, and earth.

Salvation from transmigration the souls win, so far as they do not belong to the *abhavya*, who never escape from samsâra, through energetic work for freeing themselves from the influence of matter; new entry of karmic matter must be avoided (through *samvara*, stopping the access), and what has already been acquired, must be destroyed (through *nirjarâ*, cleaning out) For this it is useful to obey the five commandments, which forbid killing, theft, lying, unchastity, and possession of property, and further self-control, perseverance, fasting (which is sometimes continued until death), self-torture, study, and meditation. All these phenomena are indeed well known to us, but the goal they lead to is not similar to that of the systems of religious philosophy or of the Upanishads; the saved *(nirgrantha*, free from fetters) live in eternal bliss on the highest summit of the world, safeguarded against being ever more dragged along into the whirl of transmigration.

What is required of the adherent of Jainism is, as we have seen, not very different from what other Indian religions exact

But the fulfilment is often carried through in a rigoristic manner, which gives them a separate stamp The command not to take the life of any living being leads to unconditioned abstinence from eating meat and from taking spirituous drinks (which are thought to be filled with life) Many monks wear a veil before their mouth, in order not accidently to swallow insects Also the Jain hospitals for animals are worthy of notice and have led to many mistaken witticisms in Europe

Though the emancipated prophets do not interfere with the course of the world and can not help the believers, they are nevertheless worshipped in magnificent temples, such exercises in devotion being supposed to have a purifying influence on the souls, but it is forbidden to address prayers to them

The whole system of this religion makes a very dry and schematic impression, which is further confirmed, when one follows it in its innumerable classifications and enumerations Seen from a philosophical point of view, it offers through its unraveling a richer yield, but it is significant that Jainism — in contrast to Buddhism — has not properly understood to knit the religious and philosophical wefts together into one whole, and that is probably one of the reasons why this doctrine has never won adherents outside India

One aspect of this thinking has had some importance in India *Svâdvâda* is one of its denominations the doctrine of *svât* (the potential mood of the verb *as* "to be") It is a consistent relativism, which here takes the lead One may say, *e g*, about a pitcher that "it is But from another view point one may also say that "it is not" A great number of the most contradictory characteristics can be stated about a thing, so that every affirmation is only right in a certain way, but again wrong in a certain way, every affirmation is ineffable, is both right and wrong, is both right and ineffable, is both wrong and ineffable, is both true and wrong as well as ineffable Thus every assertion is only true in a limited sense. These reflections, which are

carried through with great acumen, make a curious impression side by side with the often substantial and rough theories of Jainism. There seems to be a gulf between the layman's unmodified conceptions and the play of thought of the learned Jains.

Buddhism

There is much in Jainism which is closely related to the way of religious thinking we meet with in Buddhism, and in the legendary picturing of Mahâvira's life there are numerous traits known from the Buddha legend, which was evolved so richly when the recollection of the historical Buddha faded away There have, therefore, been times when people were inclined to believe that we have to do with one and the same doctrine, only with sectarian variations. But nevertheless, how different are not the religious experiences for which the two founders of religion are the expressions, and how different is not the fate of their teachings? One of them, narrow and dogmatically limited to a not too numerous following of adherents within India itself, the other, with wise consideration of the believers' faculty of understanding, exercising a thoroughgoing influence on many sides of India's spiritual life, and gradually, as it became subdued by the great brahmanical dialecticians in its own homeland, spreading a net of thoughts and feelings over great parts of Asia Ceylon, Further India, Insulinde, China, Japan, Tibet, Mongolia, and Turkestan, sometimes protected by the rulers of the countries, sometimes persecuted by them, but always leaving its stamp on the peoples' conception of life and death by a penetrating infiltration into their original beliefs, which makes itself valid with the same force to this very day. And this is the case both in the refined speculations of the intellectual upper classes, and in the layman's clinging to those sides of Buddha's teaching

which gave the peoples an acceptable explanation of what life is, what it could give, what it could teach, and which consequences could be drawn from this teaching. And here the Buddha figure itself was certainly not the least important factor. One may quarrel

Buddha

about how the historical Buddha in reality was, that is less interesting; for Buddha is of course what he is to each of his adherents. The type varies in the course of the centuries, but a firm kernel of the personality has found an imperishable expression in the legend, this legend which is such an essential

factor in the way the people were imbued with the Buddhist way of thinking

We hear how Siddhârtha, with the family-name *Gautama*, the coming Buddha, was born in the Lumbini-park by Queen Mâyâ, in the neighbourhood of Kapilavastu, where his father Çuddhodana was king The wise Asita prophesied that the boy was to have a great future as a holy preacher. In order to prevent this, the father tried to let the boy, who after his mothers death had been taken care of by her sister Mahâprajâpati, grow up in glory and luxury without knowledge of the darker side of life He married his cousin Yaçodharâ, and had a son Râhula But already before a son was born to him (the most important event in an Indian's life), his scepticism regarding existence was awakened, the sight of an old man, a diseased one, and a corpse in putrescence gave him insight into the vanity of life, and the sight of a wandering beggar monk showed him the path away from a world where everything is perishable and deceiving The birth of the son seemed to him a fetter, which would tie him to the life he had led hitherto, and at night-time he rode away on his horse Kanthaka, only accompanied by his faithful charioteer, whom he sent home with a message to his father and wife

The future Buddha was then 29 years old, he studied Sâmkhya and Yoga with two famous ascetics, Arâda Kâlâma and Udraka Râmaputra, but left them without having found what he sought Then he subjected himself during six years to rigid fasting and energetic self-torture, until he almost succumbed, but this also, he now saw, was not the way, to the great disappointment of five monks who, in admiration, had followed his ascetic exercises

But one night, when he had sunk down in self-concentration under a fig-tree at Bodh Gayâ, he at last won the knowledge he had been seeking in different ways, the attainment of the insight itself is described in accordance with the picture given in the Yoga literature of the stages in the state of ecstasy which is the aim of

the meditation For a time the Buddha indulged in the joy of having at last attained insight into the coherence of life and the conditions that are decisive for it, and into the way to salvation from it into Nirvâna. Mâra, the temptor of Buddhism, tried to induce him to keep his knowledge to himself and to enter Nirvâna at once, but Buddha (for now he is a Buddha, an awakened), preferred to give others a share in his insight. Two merchants, who passed by, gave him something to eat, and honoured him; they became the first laybrethren of Buddhism, but he got his first real disciples in the five monks who had given him up as a deserter He found them in the deer-park at Benares; at first they would not recognize him, but under the impression of his fascinating personality they listened to his teaching and became entirely won over to it A pillar raised to commemorate this event by King Açoka (3rd century B. C), is still standing there.

Now begins the time when the Buddha, as the wandering propagator of his doctrine of salvation, gathered more and more disciples, and sending them out spread his religion far and wide. Numerous adherents followed him, King Bimbisâra in Magadha helped him and his monks in many ways; Buddha won also his father and his son for his teaching His stepmother wished to become a nun, but Buddha would not listen to any talk about an order of nuns, only later on he yielded to the request of his favourite pupil Ananda and gave women access to the order, "but then the doctrine will only last 500 years," he said, a prediction which, as we know, has not been fulfilled.—

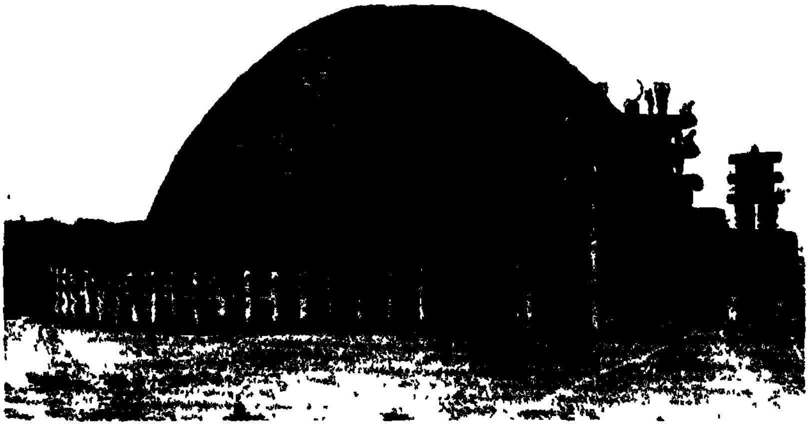
In the peaceful course of the life of the Buddha, one discordant incident is known, his cousin Devadatta, who felt himself slighted, made attempts against his life, but in vain Thus e g the wild elephant, which he let drive against the Buddha in a narrow lane, stopped overpowered by the "benevolence" that radiated from the Master, and turned away tamed Later on, Devadatta tried to get the better of the Buddha by making propaganda for a stricter conduct of life among the monks, but also here without

success. Else it is mainly harmony which stamps the account of the Buddha's preaching, as it is concentrated in the stanza which became the disciples' confession of faith: "All the things that

Devadatta's attempt against Buddha's life

proceed from a cause, their cause the Lord has proclaimed, and also how they are suppressed". — The only interruption which is mentioned in the more than forty years during which his preaching went on, were the periods of rest, necessitated by the rainy season (from the middle of June till the beginning of October), for him as well as for the other numerous wandering holy men.

About this period we only find stray accounts in the old texts; on the other hand, the account becomes fuller when we are nearing the end of his life. When he became an octogenarian, he seems to have felt the approach of death; he directed his steps towards his home-country; in the town of Pâvâ he was taken ill in the house of the smith Cunda, after eating some pork, and with difficulty he reached Kuçinagara about 60 miles from Kapilavastu Here he had a couch made for himself, and used his last hours



Stûpa at Sanchi

to instruct the monks about their mutual relations, etc., and referring them to his teachings as the only guide. And then he uttered his last words. "Listen, ye monks, to what I still have to say; all that is composed, is liable to decay, go on striving without cessation". Then he raised himself from one stage of self-concentration to another, and entered into Nirvâna. His corpse was cremated with princely honours, and what the fire left, was divided among the believers as relics, over which were raised stûpas, relic-mounds.

Thus the account of the Buddha's life appears in legendary

form, but with removal of the variegated embellishments which were poetically added. Emendated in this way, it can scarcely be doubted that the account has, on the whole, an historical character. It is supported by the memorials which Açoka raised at the places where the Buddha was born and where he made his first sermon. It is also supported by the finding of an urn which, according to the inscription, contains

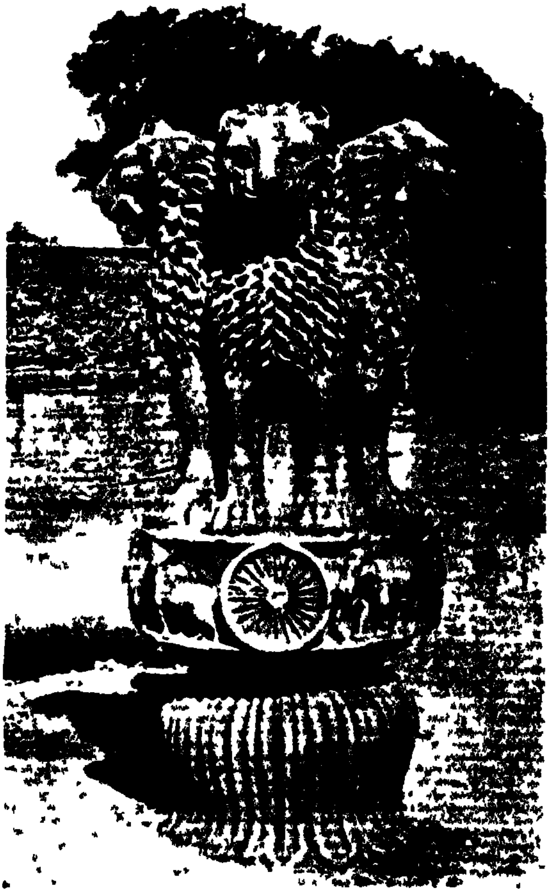
Urn with Buddha relics

the relics of the holy Buddha of the Çâkya family The inscriptions, both of Açoka and of the urn, which are not older than the third century B.C., are thus a couple of centuries later than the Buddha, whose death probably took place ca. 480 B.C. However, at such a comparatively short time after these events one did not doubt their historical truth; and the theory framed earlier, which would make Buddha's life to a sun-myth has now

no followers. That mythical traits may have inspired details of the legend, is quite a different matter.

If we ask about the purport of the Buddha's teaching, it is of importance to maintain that it must have appeared differently according to the hearers he was addressing; the tradition distinctly mentions that he accomodated it to his adherents' faculty of understanding, when framing his speeches. But apart from this, it is evident that there must be a difference between the philosophically based penetrating psychological analysis, on which he laid stress, and the common ethical demands everybody could grasp We learn a good deal when we see that King Açoka, who in his numerous pillar- and rock-inscriptions admonishes his subjects, never enters into difficult matters but always keeps to teachings which certainly are Buddhistic, but not at all the whole Buddhism He admonishes his subjects to toleration towards other religious societies, stresses the importance of unselfishness, good deeds, commiseration, liberality, veracity and purity. In one edict, where he expressly says that all what the holy Buddha has said is well said, he recommends for study various passages in the Canon, and mentions among two related texts just that one which limits itself to a general ethical instruction as against the other which goes more deeply into the theoretical side of the teaching. In his edicts we hear nothing about the four "truths", nothing about the eightfold path, nothing about the chain of mutually conditioned relations, nothing about the Buddha's supernatural faculties, nothing about Nirvâna. We hear nothing about the always energetically stressed fight against the belief in an I, a soul, and the ever repeated warning against identifying one's self with one or more of the constituents which momentarily make up the individual. Nothing about the often stressed admonitions to evoke in one's self sensations of good-will, compassion, sharing happiness, and mental equipoise towards all beings Nothing about exercises in the thought about the worthlessness and perishableness of all things,

and finally nothing about schooling oneself in the practice of breathing All this is essential in the Buddha s teaching, but it is instructive that Açoka does not reckon with it in the popular reli-



Açoka pillar from Sarnath

gion, and the same is also the case with the Buddhist lay-people in our time We thus more easily understand that it has been possible for this religion to retain its firm hold on the great

masses, whom the psychologically and the metaphysically comprehensible sides might else frighten away.

If we turn from the quite popular side of the Buddha's teaching and ask about the reflections which are most characteristic of it, we are often referred to the speech he made, after having become a Buddha, to the five quondam fellow-ascetics. It is called the sermon of Benares Buddha begins by speaking about the two extremes one should take care not to become addicted to The one is a banal and aimless life in sensual enjoyment, the other a painful and aimless life in self-torture Against these two extremes he puts a middle way (madhyamâ pratipad) "which opens the eyes, awakens the understanding, and leads to rest, to insight, to clearness, to Nirvâna" And this "way" it is which has become famous as the "eigthfold path' right view, right decision, right speech, right deed, right life, right exertion, right recollection, right self-concentration To this is then joined the doctrine of the four "truths", *i e* aspects towards existence, the four fundamental reflections about "suffering", *i e* the disharmony that characterizes life and its conditions "Such is the holy truth about suffering to be born is suffering, to become old is suffering, disease is suffering, to become united with what one does not love is suffering, to become separated from what one loves is suffering, not to get what one desires is suffering, in short· the five groups (which constitute the personality) that condition our striving after existence are suffering — Such is the truth about the "origin of suffering". it is this thirst which evokes rebirth, which is accompanied by lust and desire, which finds its satisfaction here and there, thirst for pleasures, thirst for a future existence, thirst for power. -- Such is the truth about the "cessation of suffering" it consists in thoroughly stopping this thirst, giving it up, pushing it away, shaking it off, not giving it room — Such is the truth about the "way leading to the cessation of suffering" it is the holy eightfold path right view, etc."

This statement is of course Buddhistic and has here got a personal formulation which is certainly the Buddha's own, but in its components it is common to many schools of thought within Indian religion. It is found *e g.* in the Yoga school, where we, with regard to the four points, are furthermore referred to the four parts of medical lore: the disease, the cause of the disease, the healing, and the medicaments. It is thus well-known matters that are offered, but it cannot be denied that the formulation gives the well-known ideas a stamp which explains their popularity with monks and lay-men

Nearer in the direction of the essentials in Buddhism leads a speech made not long after the one already mentioned. Here the Buddha addresses his monks and says "All, ye monks, is on fire. And what is meant by this All that is on fire? The eye is on fire; the visible objects are on fire, the consciousness of sight is on fire, the contact of the sight is on fire; the sensation conditioned by it is on fire, be it agreeable or disagreeable or neither of both, it is also on fire And what is the fire through which All is on fire? All is put on fire by the fire of desire, by the fire of hatred, by the fire of infatuation, by birth, by becoming old, by death, by sorrows, lamentations, sufferings, dejectedness and despair All is on fire, I say." And then we get the same explanation about the ear, the objects of hearing, the consciousness of hearing, the contact of hearing, about the sensation conditioned by that, however it may be felt. And then the same is said about the organ of smell, its objects and its processes; about mind, its objects and its processes. All these appearances and the sensation rising through them burn in the fire of desire, of hatred, and infatuaton. And further the Buddha sets forth how he who understands this, gets tired of the eye, gets tired of the visible things, gets tired of the sight-consciousness, gets tired of the sight-connection, tired of the sensation conditioned by that. And also towards the other organs of sense, their objects, their processes, and the sensation that appear through them If one

has got so far, one is freed from passion, and thus one is saved; one does not return to the world any more.

Here we have the genuine Buddhism: the phenomena are split up; the processes whose contents the layman does not reflect on are dissolved into single constituents, the aim being to loosen the grasp these things have on our "personality". All the factors, whose interplay constitutes our personality, are separated from one another into finer and finer separate parts, so that our apparently so firm individuality disappears, and there remain only an endless number of isolated elements, whose working together under certain conditions and after a definitive law makes up existence

The Buddha does not, as we know, admit the existence of an eternal soul or an eternal substance, no more than that of a god, as we hear that other schools teach The individuals, as well as the world that surrounds them, consist of a multitude of elements which cannot be further divided, and which in their interplay produce all the appearances constituting the world of phenomena. The Buddhists call these elements *dharma*, with a word which has many meanings, and which is used about norm, moral, religion, quality, potencies, but can, in this connection, best be rendered by elements It is the factors which condition the apparently psychic and material phenomena, it is not qualities inherent in substances, things, or similar matters, but the things themselves in ever new combinations. Hence results the teaching of *anâtman*, the being devoid of an I; all phenomena are, radically viewed, devoid of essence Thus also the teaching of *anitya*, perishableness, all phenomena have only a momentary existence. Finally the teaching of *duhkha*, "suffering"; all phenomena are bound up with pain, just on account of their impermanence, this is valid both for painful and for pleasant sensations.

It is important to stress that these elements *(dharma)* rise in dependence on each other "When the organ of sight and the

objects of sight are there, the consciousness of sight rises; the connection between these three elements produces the contact (between the apparent subject and the apparent object); in consequence of this contact evolves a feeling of desire or disinclination"

In the phenomena mentioned above we must always see the elements, *dharma*, as what is in function, all these are mutually conditioned, and this mutual relation between what is conditioned, and what is conditioning, is subjected to the law-boundness which is, in the last instance, the metaphysical contents of Buddhism The law that forms all the temporary apparent individuals and the apparent world which surrounds them, in accordance with the ethical law which makes the "individuals" responsible and is decisive for the new combination which constitutes the individual in the next form of existence

To imagine a continued series of existences without any permanent "soul" or any "personality" seems to many to be impossible The Buddhists do not find any difficulty as regards this point They explain the transition from one existence to another by the help of images, when a lamp is lit and burning, is then the flame in the first watch of the night identical with the flame in the second watch, or are they different? The answer must be both yes and no When a man steals the mangos somebody else planted, are the stolen ones then identical with those which the owner has planted? Both yes and no When a man lits a fire to warm himself, and that fire sets another man's field on fire, is then the devastating fire the same as that which was lit and the man consequently responsible for the disaster? Both yes and no The fire is not the same, but the man is responsible, because the last fire is conditioned by the first This kind of relations, gone through in detail and closely analyzed by the Buddhist, serves to explain how we, without assuming a permanent soul-substance or something similar, can imagine the new forms of existence as conditioned by, and therefore caused by, the

existences left behind. The understanding of this seems not to present any difficulties to a Buddhist.

Instead of an I, Buddha places five groups *(skandha)* whose co-operation constitute the existing personality The first group is the material form *(rûpa)*, it is our body, our organs of sense, and the outer world we perceive The next one is the feeling *(vedanâ)*, it is desire, aversion, or absence of either. The third are the conceptions *(samjñâ)*; that is the pictures formed by sensual impressions, the things with their names The fourth consists of forces and dispositions *(samskâra)*, it is a series of psychic processes and phenomena of will-power that stamp the individual The fifth group, finally, is consciousness *(vijñâna)*, that is the pure consciousness without regard to the contents Also these dharmas work of course in agreement with the law, which is at the same time natural and moral law, when the elements come into being in mutual dependence

The Buddha laid much stress on the understanding of this mutual dependence of things He poses a series of phenomena, which one must not by any means consider as an evolutionary series, but as a demonstration through the existences, of what conditions existence *(pratitya-samutpâda)* Conditioning our actual existence are 1) delusion *(avidvâ* - ignorance, not knowing the Buddha's teaching, the wrong metaphysical fundamental conception), 2) instincts and dispositions *(samskâra* -- the fruit of acts) Our present existence is due to what is conditioned by the preceding links, *viz* 3) consciousness (*vijñâna*, the germ of the new being), 4) name and form (*nâma-rûpa* - the individual, the combination of the five groups), 5) the six bases of sensation (*shadâyatana*, the organs of sense and thought), 6) touch (*sparça*, the contact between these organs and the outer world), 7) feeling (*vedanâ*, produced by this contact), 8) desire (*trishnâ*, the thirst for life, sexual desire, the tendency to gather new karman), 9) striving after the things (*upâdâna*, grasping after the objects of the world), 10) existence (*bhava*, coming into being). Conditions

are thus given for 11) birth (*jâti*, the new birth), and 12) high age and death (*jarâ-marana* and everything else that existence may offer).

Each of these links is of such a nature that it cannot exist unless the next preceding one exists, and, consequently, can only appear as conditioned by or in relation to the preceding one; and, on the other hand, every link will disappear by the disappearance of the preceding one. By the suppression of any link, the whole series collapses, for it exists only as a whole, as an analysis of a single moment in existence in its mutual conditions of existence With a succession in time we have nothing to do in this connection.

In all these elements and in their possibilities for combination, the Buddhists have material for a meditation which plays a great rôle also with them But we must never forget that these systematic deductions have not their aim in themselves, but all aim at the same purpose to be released from the existence to which all beings have been and are bound until they win the saving insight The Buddha did only take an interest in that knowledge which led to this goal, and rejected all purposeless questions, *e g.* whether the world is limited or not, whether it is eternal or not, whether "soul" and body are identical or not, whether Nirvâna is being or not-being All such questions the Buddha rejected, not because he could not answer them, but because their being answered did not advance salvation; and he shows which dangers for the deliverance from the world the occupation with such matters brings about

The description of those problems of thought with which the Buddhists have to struggle has, in the nature of things, here been merely indicatory. The Buddhism, which applies to the people, is much simpler and coincides mainly with what has been mentioned above in connection with Açoka's inscriptions on rocks and pillars. It is essentially a moral teaching, with indication of the forming of improved conditions in the next form of existence,

if one avoids those acts which bind one to existence, and only practises those which are not rooted in selfish desire. On the great mass of the people Buddhism has still a strong hold, which is, however, surely, above all due to the soothing charm eradiating from the Master's figure, which is strengthened in a high degree by the simple and beautiful cult sacred to his memory. That numerous monks as well as lay people look on the Buddha as a God, who can interfere in the course of life, can scarcely be denied, how much the learned monks may declaim against this capital misunderstanding

The kernel of the Buddhist society is of course the monks The three things which a Buddhist, in his confession, seeks refuge in, are the Buddha, his doctrine, and the congregation of his monks These "three jewels" *(triratna)* are the foundation of the religious life of the Buddhists; the Buddha himself, as the legend has formed his life; the doctrine, as it was preached with due regard to the capacity of understanding of the various circles, the congregation of monks, as the living expression of the doctrine. This order of monks is formally not very different from other Indian monastic orders Apart from criminals and people with contagious disease, everybody could, without taking account of difference in caste, subject himself to the ceremony *(upasampadâ)* which indicated the abandonment of life in the civic society In addition to the five commandments (not to kill, not to steal, not to lie, not to drink spirits, and not to live an unchaste life), which were valid for lay people, the monks must subject themselves to five additional ones, which forbade them to eat outside the regulated time (that is to say practically after noon, at 12 o'clock), to be present at dancing, singing, music, and play acting, wearing ornaments, or using perfumes and unguents, lying in a high and broad bed, and finally accepting gold and silver The demand for sexual abstinence was of course absolute The monks were dressed in three pieces of cloth of yellow colour, which covered the whole body with the exception

of the right shoulder, hair and beard should be shaved. Only five things the monk was allowed to possess, a girdle, an alms-bowl *(pâtra)*, a razor, a needle, and a sieve. The monks should beg their food, what they still do to-day, though it is not usually necessary, as the monasteries *(vihâra)*, thanks to the lay people, dispose of means for the support of the monks However the

Adoration of the wheel of the law

going abegging is necessary, in order to give people the oppor tunity to acquire merit. It is worthy of notice that every monk may leave the order at any time The Buddha's teaching is always based on voluntariness.

The life of the monks went quietly on, with begging, study, and instruction Interruptions in the daily life were occasioned by the days of new- and full-moon, when the monks assembled for

devotion and confession, with reading of the old *Pratimoksha,* where all possible infringements of the rules of the order were enumerated, with the question whether anybody felt himself guilty. On these days reading of sacred texts and preaching to the lay people took place The day of the full moon in the month Vaiçâkha (April-May), being the day of the Buddha's birth, of his acquiring the saving knowledge, and of his entering into Nirvâna, was celebrated with special solemnity The monks' torch-light procession around the temples in the tropical night is of indescribable beauty and solemnity With the relics interred in Stûpas or preserved in other ways, are also connected practises of devotion Representations of the Buddha are not known earlier than the last century B C, before that time the adherents were satisfied with symbolical representations, such as the wheel (the wheel of the doctrine set in motion by the Buddha), etc The holy fig-tree, which is found in most temples, and the not quite uncommon foot-prints of the Buddha always enjoy respectful worship

At his death the Buddha had referred to his doctrine as that which the monks had to stick to A short time after his death, a council was therefore held in *Râjagriha,* where his rules for the order of monks *(vinaya)* and his teachings *(dharma)* were fixed One hundred years later a new council took place in Vaiçâli, in order to remedy a certain laxity in the observance of the rules of the order, this meeting resulted in a split between the orthodox "Elders" *(sthavira)* and the *Mâhâsanghika* group the beginning of an ever continued division into sects During the reign of Açoka a third council was held in *Pâtaliputra* in 245 B.C., where the whole Canon was laid down in three "baskets" *(Pitakas),* in addition to the *Vinaya-* and *Sutta-pitakas* a part about metaphysics and scholastics *(abhidhamma)* in the Mâgadhî language This we have handed down in its entirety in Pâli, a language from Central India, which the monks consider to be identical with Mâgadhi And this is the only complete Canon we possess, but

fragments in Sanskrit of a Canon, which is identical with the Pâli version in many points and supplements it in others, have been found, especially in Central Asia, and can be traced in Chinese and Tibetan translations

Açoka did not only try to safeguard Buddhism through his edicts and his Council, but would also propagate it through the missionaries he sent out to Macedonia, Syria, and Egypt, and with special effect to Southern India and to Ceylon In the last-mentioned place it has retained its dominating position to this day, and Ceylon became the seat of a very considerable literary activity for the preservation and explanation of the old texts Here in the monastery of Anurâdhapura, in the fifth century A.D, Buddhaghosha worked out his fundamental commentaries on the Pâli Canon, in Anurâdhapura we can still see an off-shoot of the holy fig-tree, under which the Buddha won "his redeeming insight" *(bodhi*, hence the Bo tree)

These councils bear witness to a more or less evident sectarian development, but the future was to show a quite different dis-integration in the shaping of the religion There were many points in the original comparatively simple teaching which might become the starting point for such disintegrations, and there was in Buddhism much of the old Indian wisdom that might easily burst through the narrow limits which the Buddha had set to speculation Especially the explanation of the Master's personality itself gave occasion to great divergencies In the oldest Canon one reckoned with 24 Buddhas previous to that of our time, and looked forward to a coming one, Maitreya, who still lives in Heaven, as a future Buddha, "Bodhisattva" such a future Saviour is called It was tempting to assume all these Buddhas to be identical as a cosmic force, which is now potential and now actual, and whose revelation, the holy truth, the doctrine *(dharma)*, gets the character of the absolute

Some maintained that the Buddha has not lived in the world at all, but has sent an image of himself to proclaim the teaching, a

created body *(nirmânakâya)* He himself is identical with the teaching *(dharmakâya)*, which appears in the rôle of the old monism as the real essence of all that exists *(bhûtatathâtâ)* Buddha himself has, an endless time ago, won salvation, and with his enjoying body *(sambhogakâya)* given himself up to eternally undisturbed peace, knowledge and bliss From this idea there is no long step to the conception of a primordial Buddha *(âdibuddha)*, the pure light of knowledge, who through meditation creates five meditative Buddhas *(dhyânibuddha)* *Vairocana*, *Akshobhya*, *Ratnasambhava*, *Amitâbha* and *Amoghasiddhi*, who beget five meditative Bodhisattvas· *Samantabhadra*, *Vajrapâni*, *Ratnapâni*, *Avalokiteçvara*, and *Viçvapâni* These create the perishable universe, in our time we live in the period of Avalokiteçvara, whose saviour is our historical Buddha

Another Bodhisattva, who is much revered and ardently worshipped, is *Mañjuçri*, who is represented with the sword of insight in one hand and the book of the ten perfections of realisation *(Prajñâpâramitâ)* in the other, these are liberality *(dâna)*, good life *(çila)*, patience *(kshânti)*, energy *(vîrya)*, meditation *(dhyâna)*, perception *(prajñâ)*, skilled application of means of the salvation of living beings *(upâyakauçalya)*, resoluteness *(pranidhâna)*, transcendent faculties *(bala)* and knowledge *(jñâna)*.

These Bodhisattvas are so important, because filled by compassion they help men to salvation, while Amitâbha himself sits in the paradise Sukhâvati, without being able to carry out any action. Here we have such divine help for salvation-seeking humanity as the original Buddhism refused. The old doctrine was denominated *Hinayâna*, the smaller vehicle, the narrower career, which only addressed itself to the narrow circle of monks and ascetics, while the Bodhisattvas' way to salvation was called *Mahâyâna*, the great vehicle, the great career, which tried to bring salvation to all This Mahâyâna was strongly influenced from schools within the religous philosophy of Brahmanism, but

it yielded, on the other hand, also very essential contributions to the later formations of brahmanical philosophy And it was not only the philosophy with which it made a kind of compact, also

Avalokiteçvara

more popular currents within Hinduism are related with aspects of these Buddhist developments This is, *e g*, the case with the movement which is, in both religions, called *Tantra* Instruction was given theoretically in means *(sâdhana)* for evoking powerful

potencies. The Buddha is represented embracing his female potency, *çakti*, the goddess *Târâ*, an embrace which symbolizes the male-female principle in the evolution of the world. *Vajra* (the thunderbolt and also the name of the male genitals) is worn as a symbol of the Buddha's creative power and has given its name to the whole school, which is called *Vajrayâna*

Buddha and Tara

This school lays the chief stress on formulas (*dhârani*), through which one keeps the truths won through meditation. Through concentration on a "germ" syllable *(bîja)* is won the faculty to evoke the deity of this syllable and obtain its supernatural faculties. Also certain positions of the hands (*mudrâ*) play a rôle,

as well as the use of circles *(mandala)* as objectives for the concentration, these are drawn on cloth or engraved on stone or metal and exhibit mystic-symbolical syllables or pictures As the whole world is a manifestation of the primordial Buddha, also the lower passions and tendencies have their importance as possibilities for a higher development, and love of women can *e g* develop into an all comprising love and be a help towards salvation At the side of the male active principle stands the passive cognizing female one, and these principles are found in every man and woman, whose union therefore can realize the transcendent bliss *(mahâsukha)* and unity in all multiplicity This certainly quite old way of thinking comes very near to the doctrine of *çakti* evolved in Hinduism, which will be described later on

It was, however, the two great schools, Hinayana and Mahayana, which, in a great number of subdivisions, were destined to get world-embracing importance in the history of religion It is not, perhaps, easy to understand that so different conceptions can be considered as one and the same religion, but the dogma was accepted that the Buddha had accommodated his teaching to the hearers' faculty of comprehension, so that the truth for one was different from what the other had understood. The Indians maintain four sentences as valid for all Buddhists All is *momentary*, all is *pain*, all is *individual*, and all is *void* In these sentences, which inculcate that nothing persists, that there is no possibility for harmony in existence, that everything is like itself alone, and that our conceptions of the things is based on pure illusion, was found what makes Buddhism to Buddhism And four aspects towards the conception of the world were schematically stated, within Hinayânism two main schools were mentioned, the *Vaibhâshika* school, which held that we conceive the outer world, existing in reality, through direct sense-perception, and the *Sautrântika* school which held that we could only have a notion of the outer world through logical inference, and, in the

same way, they spoke of two main schools within Mahâyâna. the *Yogâcâra* school, which denied the existence of the outer world, and the *Mâdhyamika* school, which maintained that everything is unreal and only has a relative existence. This of course touches an important side of these schools' way of thinking, but is not exhaustive as far as their religious importance is concerned. There we have other problems which are discussed, and where one tries to support one's conception of them in referring to the Master's words Some maintained the transcendental existence of a permanent I, as the Buddha occasionally speaks about a *pudgala*, a personality, as bearer of the burden, while others stuck to the doctrine of the groups (*skandha*) as what alone constitutes the personality It can hardly be doubted that this last one is the original doctrine, but the pudgala theory is interesting, because it shows that not all were able to combine the denial of a permanent I with the doctrine of *karman*, the retaliation of the acts Another way to evade the difficulties is found in the *vijñânavâda* of the Yogâcâra school, the doctrine that everything has its existence in the consciousness alone It is thought that produces both intelligence, reason, and senses, that builds a world out of the magazine (*âlaya*) of germs resting in the consciousness, for there lies the germ of all future conceptions and the remains of all previous thoughts and acts Thus is constructed a world which again reacts on the "magazine of consciousness" through the organs of sense; but this world has of course no more reality than the things we see in dreams The "magazine of consciousness" is most easily understood when we think of the endless fund of pictures, etc., from which we derive the substance for the world of dreams we move in during sleep

Most deeply into the question about the I and its world goes the *Mâdhyamika* school, founded by *Nâgârjuna* in the second century A.D., and which is called the Middle Path, because it neither attributed being nor not-being to the things. The Buddha taught that all phenomena, all elements (*dharma*) were mutually

dependent; hence *Nâgârjuna* justly infers that no absolute reality belongs to them, but only a conditioned, secondary, existence; they are empty *(çûnya)* or relative. Seen from a higher point of view, neither the conditional nor the unconditional dharma have any reality, thus also Nirvâna, which in no respect differs from the unredeemed world This is not, of course, Nâgarjuna's earnest opinion, but what he wants, is to show that all our conceptions are self-contradictory, meaningless, without reality, and therefore unable to teach us anything about an absolute reality He shows that conceptions such as cause and effect are only relative and cannot stand a more penetrating analysis. There does not exist anything which we call sensual conception, no soul, no Buddha, no Nirvâna etc., all discussions about realities are just as foolish as to discuss the colour of the hair of a barren woman's son, a barren woman's son is nonsense, and Nâgârjuna shows without difficulty that this is valid for all our other fictions Everything which is conditioned by something else is unreal, but it may nevertheless have its importance in the world of daily life. And all this in reality leads to a standpoint where Nâgârjuna true enough abstains from setting up any positive theory, but in reality opens the way to the highest "reality" lying beyond reality and irreality, the All-One, and thus with this keenly argueing dialectician we also come to rest in the Absolute, which we from the mystic of the Upanishads, have been accustomed to consider as India's answer to all metaphysical questions. And it is characteristic that just in this school we find the most emotional and sincerest devotional attitude towards the figure of the Buddha itself, however much Nâgarjuna may exert himself to prove the "unreality" of the Buddha

Like many others among the teachers of Buddhism, Nâgârjuna gained no little influence on the philosophy of Brahmanism, and especially on the elaboration of the thoughts of the Upanishads which became the orthodox belief of India, the Vedânta of Çamkara This dependence, which led to Çamkara's being

accused of crypto-Buddhism, he tried to veil through a violent polemic against the Mâdhyamika school And this polemic had its effect, when Buddhism gradually lost ground in its own homeland, at the same time as it continued its victorious march over the rest of Asia begun already long ago, it is due not least to its having been so to say outdisputed from India by the great dialecticians of Brahmanism such as Çamkara and Kumârila, who used and gained victory through the weapons, which the Buddhist philosophers had forged In India a religion or philosophy, which cannot hold its own in tournaments of discussion at the princes courts, cannot either keep its position in the learned and distinguished world That is one side of the matter The other is probably that Buddhism, on so many points, had approached Hinduism and thus lost its separate stamp, and then the rich world of gods of Hinduism offered, to the lay people, greater help than the Buddha s dignified and sober teaching

It has been mentioned above that Asoka sent missionaires about to propagate the acquaintance with the Buddha s teaching Of great importance became the activity which his son *Mahendra* displayed in Ceylon, where one still points out the mountain-cave situated in wonderful surroundings (in the neighbourhood of Anuradhapura) which he inhabited It was also in Ceylon that authoritative validity was given to the written Canon (40 B C), in the first centuries the tradition had been oral, and it took some time before one reconciled oneself to attribute the same weight to the written word A literature of commentaries, written in Singhalese, got importance for the growth of Buddhism in Ceylon, where later on (in the fifth century A D) Buddhaghosha s commentaries and systematic representation *(Visuddhimagga)* in Pâli laid the foundation for further penetration into the old texts The sprig of the Bo tree mentioned above, and the Buddha s tooth, which, in 309 A D , was brought to Ceylon, where it is now to be found in the temple in Kandy, are, among many other holy things (foot prints and relics) objects of much worship In

spite of discussions within the order and attacks from outside, Buddhism has held its own as the dominating factor in the religious life of the island, and in our days a not inconsiderable activity of propaganda starts from Colombo and other places, where monks devote themselves to work for the Buddha's teaching.

As in Ceylon, we also have in Burma and Siam a form of Buddhism which, with the Pâli Canon as its holy scripture, keeps firmly to the original teaching (often called "Southern Buddhism"). In both places the present form of the religion is due to Singhalese influence, in both places the teaching is strongly filled with the belief in spirits (*Nat* and *Phi*) of more or less malevolent kinds; and in both places we have the custom that young men are instructed in the monasteries and also live there for a shorter or longer time as monks, without this implying a definitive entrance into the order. It is also proper to point out the great and meritorious activity which in recent time, both in Burma and in Siam, has been displayed by learned men for the scientific study of the Pâli literature Very valuable editions of the Canon have been prepared and with great liberality, especially from Siam, distributed to scholars and libraries of the whole world.

In the East Indian Islands Buddhism has on the contrary had to yield to Islam, which since the thirteenth century spread over them. Formerly the state of things was different, and splendid temple buildings such as Boro Budur in Java bear witness to a time when the Buddhist schools dominated the spiritual life there.

Of greater importance for the history of the world was the mission which, from the North-Western frontiers of India, brought Buddhism eastwards, through Central Asia In China and Korea, in Japan, Annam and Cochin China, Buddhism has held its own, now as the prevailing form of religion, now among other factors which were decisive for the religious life in these countries; but this belongs to the history of religions in Fastern Asia.

Among the missionaries who, in the third century B.C., were sent abroad, *Madhyântika* is mentioned as one to whom was entrusted the mission towards the North-West He is said to have worked both in Kashmir and in Gandhâra to the West of the Indus. In the Greek states in North-Western India and in Bactria, the Buddha's teaching has enjoyed great esteem, and we have a beautiful witness of this in a Pâli work, which contains a series of dialogues between one of the Greek kings, *Menander* (ca 140 B.C.) and the Buddhist monk *Nâgasena*, who of course knows how to refute all the king's objections and is applauded by him and all the Greeks present It is also in those districts that the Greeco-Indian art evolved the representation of the Buddha which became the basis of the Buddha-type we find in the various Buddhist lands.

When Indo Scythian tribes from Central Asia took over the Greek dominions in the frontier lands, they themselves joined Buddhism and became the means for its expansion in Eastern Turkestan The Buddha's teaching found a considerable support with the Indo-Scythian king *Kanishka* (first half of the second century A D.); this powerful ruler, who held sway over a realm consisting of the Afghanistan of the present day, Kashmir, and North-Western India, summoned a Counsil in *Jâlandhara* or Kundalavana, where the canonical scriptures were written down The Ceylon school would, however, not acknowledge the authority of this meeting It was Hinayâna that dominated in the first centuries after the spread of Buddhism to Eastern Turkestan, later on Mahâyâna became the prevailing school. Buddhist doctrine and culture were brought by the Tokharians in Tokharistan, and later on by related tribes in Kuci, to the Turkish Uighurs and thence to China and the whole of Eastern Asia

A great future awaited Buddhism in Tibet, whereto it came in the seventh century under King Srong-btsan Gam-po, whose two queens, from China and Nepal, were inclined towards the Buddha's doctrine In the eigth century king Khri-Song De-btsan

summoned the monk *Padmasambhava* to Tibet from Nâlandâ, a Buddhist University in Northern India. During his time monachism spread widely and the monasteries multiplied too, the monks, who are called Lamas (from *bla-ma* "teacher") in the course of

Padmasambhava

centuries became the bearers of a learned Buddhist culture, which to this day makes important contributions to the understanding of Mahâyâna, whose scriptures are found in Tibetan translation as a substitute for many lost originals in Sanskrit.

At the end of the ninth century the power of Buddhism increased through the monasteries' expropriating state-domains and

acquiring the right to exact taxes. This provoked intense persecution, the Buddhist king was murdered by his brother, who supported the old Bon-religion, but he, too, was murdered, and Buddhism maintained its position In 1038 the Bengali *Atiça*, founded a new Buddhist sect by introducing a series of reforms; he organized the church and tried to raise the moral among the monks. In the beginning of the fourteenth century the monk *Tsong-ka-pa* introduced new reforms in this sect, which as an outward distinguishing mark adopted the yellow hat, while the old school had red hats. The firm organization effected by the later reformatory efforts, became a support for Buddhism when the Mongols conquered Tibet in the thirteenth century *Kublai Khan* was converted to the Buddha's teaching by the abbot of the Sa-shya monastery, where the abbotship was inherited from father to son, for it was only in the sect of the yellow hats that celibacy was introduced The Mongol ruler made the abbot master of Western Tibet, and thus gave the monastery considerable political power When, however, the Ming dynasty ascended the throne in China in 1368, there was some talk about considerably limiting the political influence of the monasteries. It was Tsong-ka-pa's successors who now lead the policy of the church, they had their chief seat in Lha-sa The nephew of the reformator founded the monastery in Ta-shi-lun-po, while he himself, however, resided in the Po-ta-la monastery in Lha-sa The Great Lamas succeed each other through incarnation Tsong-ka-pa's successors are considered to be incarnations of Avalokitecvara, while the Great Lama of Ta-shi-lun-po is an incarnation of Amitabha; the third Great Lama in Lha-sa went as an apostle to Mongolia, where the ruler gave him the title Talai blama (Dalai Lama), a title which is still in use.

Beside the Great Lamas in Lha-sa and Ta-shi-lun po we have Great Lamas in Urga, in Mongolia, an incarnation of Maitreya, and in Peking To Lamaistic Buddhism belong also the Buryats and the population of Bhutan, where a priest king is the head of the church

Tibet is a real church-state, for the Great Lama is not only the church-ruler but possesses also the mundane power. With him at the head a strongly developed hierarchy rules over a clergical state consisting of numerous priests, sorcerers, and physicians, monasticism is spread over the whole country, and also nunneries are to be found. In an extensive Canon is preserved the doctrine of Lamaism; it counts original works as well as translations from Sanskrit and Chinese, it comprises two collections· Kan-gyur, consisting of 108 books, and Tan-gyur, which contains 225 Famous is the variegated and magnificent cult, which, with its music, incense, and candles, reminds us of the Catholic one so much that the first Christian missionaries considered it to be a diabolic imitation of the Christian cult. The holy formula originating from Avalokiteçvara. *Om manipadme hum* can best be translated "O Thou in whose lotus the jewel stands" It is an invocation of Avalokiteçvara's *çakti* (female potency) Sten Konow has shown that the esoteric meaning is "Thou (Târâ, the *çakti*) in whose *yoni* (womb) stands the *linga* (the male genital member)", and the formula is thus an expression of the union between the Buddha or Bodhisattva and his Çakti, the eternal force which effects the development of the world of rebirth Here she has united herself with her own child, the Bodhisattva, in order to bear a new generation, which shall be led to salvation, to Nirvâna The connection with the Çakti-theory of Hinduism and the Vajrayâna is evident. For Târa can also be substituted Prajñâpâramitâ, the book about the perfections, which is pictured as a woman, the mother of the Buddhas.

The formula of six syllables *(shadakshari vidyâ)* is a typical *dhârani*, a formula containing mighty power It is not to be wondered that it plays an immense rôle in Lamaism, which has got it from India as all its Buddhism These six syllables can be seen everywhere in Tibet, written on walls, painted on flags, which, when they flutter in the wind, spread the force of the words round about, noted down on strips of paper, they are

placed in greater or smaller cylinders and put in rotating movement by a turning of the hand. Much has been said about such "prayer-drums", which may also be put into motion by the wind, or a water-wheel, but one must understand that the process has nothing to do with prayer There is no god whom one tries to affect in this way, it is the force of the words themselves which keeps evil away and strengthens the good and fertile; which sets in movement the forces, that keep the whole Universe going. If one wants to underline that it is addressed to something divine, one must stick to the female potency which is invoked, to the Çakti Târâ, who then, like her pendant in Hinduism, Çiva's consort, plays the rôle as the great "Mother-deity" This may of course be done But the chief thing is, that it is purely impersonal forces which are put in motion by the holy formula; it exercises its activity without reference to the deity it represents It is quite the same way of thinking which we find at all times within the religious history of India As we, in the Vedas, had to do with mantras, with verses and formulas, whose efficacy was quite independent of whether one understood their literary meaning or not; as we, in the orthodox Veda-explaining philosophy met with the doctrine that the Veda was the primary, gods and men the secondary, and as we in the texts of Hinduism again and again are informed about the potency which is contained in apparently meaningless syllables, thus also in this later development in Vajrayâna and Lamaism "In the beginning was the word", that inscription might stand above the portal to some of the most important provinces of Indian religious theory and practice

HINDUISM

by

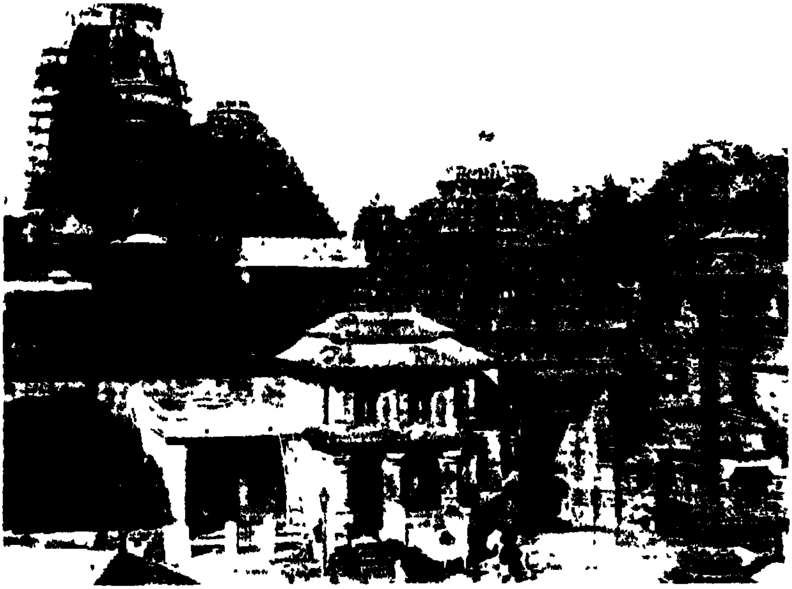
Sten Konow

The old Vedic literature is very extensive, but does not, nevertheless, give full expression to everything that occupied the mind of the ancient Indians The authors were mostly brahmans, and their chief interest was the sacrifice and the power this gave them over the people. But we have enough indications that the people had also other interests There were not only the brahmans, but also other castes, and the highest of these, the Kshatriyas - the princes and warriors - were not inclined to acknowledge the supremacy of the brahmans There were old tales and sagas about the great achievements of the ancestors in war and in peace, often mixed up with myths and fairy-tales, and the recollection of the wars of the time of conquest has not quite faded away, but is kept alive in the epical literature

There the old Vedic gods are often mentioned, but their character has changed. It is difficult to visualize man-like beings in the descriptions we find in the oldest literature They have, it is true, human defects Indra was a glutton and loved a good drink — perhaps Indo-European traits. In somewhat later texts we read about his erotical relationship with Ahalyâ, the wife of Gautama. But in the main his personal features are vague.

In Hinduism it becomes otherwise. When the gods began to be worshipped in temples, they became in a way tied to a

locality, though the old conception of their unlimited freedom of movement also remained, as we have seen in connection with Damayanti's choice of a husband. And they are more or less distinctly anthropomorphic, with human weaknesses and human desires. What man eats, that his deities also eat.



Temple of Vishnu Jagannath (Juggernauth) in Puri

Among the Vedic gods, only Vishnu and Çiva maintained their position in the course of time, the latter also having his roots in the Indus civilization. It is then also usual to speak about two religious trends: Vishnuism and Çivaism, respectively. But new powerful beings have cropped up, partly no doubt from the old non-Aryan races. Some of them go back to Vedic times e.g. when Dharti mâtâ, the supporting Earth, gets her cult. The

great rivers, such as Ganges, Jamna and Narbada, are worshipped, and pilgrims resort to them; there are sacred wells and lakes, holy mountains such as the Himâlaya and the Vindhya Tree-deities we have already found in the Indus Civilization, and especially the Pipal tree *(Ficus religiosa)* is looked upon with reverence

Of importance is also the worship of certain animals, the monkey-god *Hanumân*, Râma's faithful companion, one of India's most popular gods, with his image in numerous villages Something similar is the case with *Ganeça* or *Ganapati*, the god with the elephant-trunk, who removes all hindrances In the anti-English propaganda it was at one time proclaimed that he would in divine wrath make an end of the British rule We have the dangerous *Bâghdeo* the tiger-god, but above all the Cow is sacred, and the bull *Nandî* is frequently pictured in Çiva's temples.

Then we have many holy men, *Sâdhus* and others, to whom everybody bows down, the mystic Sarkâr, the powerful Government and its officials, etc. And their power outlasts death We hear about an energetic English official who had won the respect and devotion of the people He had no objection either to tobacco or to alcohol, and after his death cigars and empty brandy-bottles were put on his tomb as a sacrifice

The worship of the departed ancestors is old in India and aimed, *inter alia*, at preserving their faculties for the benefit of their kinsmen Especially careful one must, of course, be with regard to inimical deceased, and try to win their good-will through sacrifices. Else one would risk the worst from ghosts *(bhût)*, goblins *(rakshas, piçâca)* and from those who have died in child-bed *(churel)*, etc.

We have furthermore all kinds of powerful beings with a limited sphere of action, gods of special villages *(grâmadevatâ)*, of the family *(kuladevatâ)*, indeed, everybody has his favourite deity *(ishtadevatâ)*.

Magic, which we already learn to know in the Atharvaveda with its powerful formulas and manyfold ceremonies, has of course great importance. We hear about observances in order to produce rain or to stop it, when it becomes too abundant, to help the sun and moon against eclipses, to render earth quakes harmless, to protect oneself against the evil eye; to defeat the dangerous demons of disease, such as Çitalâ, the goddess of small-pox, to discover and punish witches; about ordeals, etc., etc., a bewildering and apparently endless multiplicity.

To this must be added the various symbols, the *linga* and the *yoni*, which we already know from the Indus civilization, the *çâlagrâma* stone with the Çivaites, and the *tulsi*-plant with the Vishnuites, etc. But these are symbols, and behind them we see the deity.

Dayânand Sarasvati, the founder of the Ârya Samâj, has told us about what happened to him as a young boy, when he had to keep awake before the linga in a Çiva-temple. The other ones went to sleep, they were accustomed to the "waking", but he kept awake. Then a mouse came forward and began to eat of the sacrificial food, and he became as thunder-struck. When his father woke up, he told him what he had seen. But his father told him how the whole matter stood. "Çiva is not here, he is seated on his throne on Mount Kailâsa in the Himâlaya. But when we, filled with faith, place our offering here, he accepts it, out of commiseration, as if it were placed before him in his own abode."

I remember a talk I had in Trichinopoly with a learned Indian barrister in front of a hill, which was considered to be a Çiva-linga. The government was not aware of this, and had given permission to blasting in order to get stones for some purpose. We were discussing archaeological questions, but suddenly he put the following question to me. "What do you think of a government which blasts away parts of God's body?" I was astonished, but I learnt more about Indian religiosity from his

words than from any learned work The mountain had always been associated with the notion of Çiva's *linga*, and this mental picture was to him a reality. We might be tempted to call this superstition, but genuine sincere faith is never superstition

Also the cult has to a great extent changed its character. The Vedic sacrifice with the sacrificial feasts, where meat and the Soma-drink were excessively indulged in, was replaced by other forms. In Kafiristân heathen sacrifices can still be witnessed, though the people has now mostly embraced Muhammedanism Professor Morgenstierne, who has filmed such a sacrifice, tells us that the acting persons took part in the performance with true enthusiasm.

In Hindu India the real sacrifice *(yajña)* has generally been replaced by *pûjâ*, a word of unknown origin In the Naighantukakânda, Nirukta II 26, we read *pragrhya pâni devân pûjayanti* "stretching out the hands (in invocation) they honour the gods" Flower and fruits are laid before them as offerings, in the temples the god's image is washed and dressed, and often placed in a large carriage and drawn out in procession. At the temple of Vishnu as *Jagannâth (Juggernauth* in antiquated English orthography) Lord of the World, in Puri in Orissa it has happened that Hindus in ecstasy have prostrated themselves before the carriage and let themselves be crushed under its wheels It is the same thing which we have already seen the vision is reality to them

A Hindu must, as a matter of course, accept the Vedic tradition with the sacrifice and the doctrines expounded by the schools of religious philosophy about it, about the influence of works *(karman)*, about transmigration *(samsâra)* and many other things It is, however, not necessary to have any precise knowledge about them, but he may join the cult as it is performed under the supervision of the leaders.

In the Indus Civilization it has, as we have seen, been assumed that traces can be found of human sacrifices, and such sacrifices

have also been asserted to have taken place in later time, especially where we have reason to assume the influence of primitive, non-Aryan tribes. It is said to have happened in earlier times that the first-born child was sacrificed to the Ganges, or that a diseased relative was sacrificed on her bank. In the Vindhya hills resides the cruel *Vindhyeçvarî* in a temple where human sacrifices are said to have been performed. The *satî*, the "good", i.e. "faithful" wife who follows her husband on the funeral pyre, sacrifices herself and is worshipped after death. The custom is still occasionally practised, in spite of all prohibitions, though it has no foundation in the Vedas.

Not uncommon is the conception that a human sacrifice is necessary if a big undertaking, *e.g.* the building of a bridge, shall succeed.

In our days bloody offerings, so far as we know also of human beings, are connected with the worship of Kâli, and in her great temple in Calcutta goats are daily brought in and decapitated in her honour. Kâli has certainly absorbed many primitive deities, and her cult is not purely, nor even prominently, Aryan. We also hear about similar sacrifices in connection with other deities, but on the whole *pûjâ* is the common form of worship.

Bhakti

The Vedic poets praise their gods in veneration and fear and sometimes almost in ecstasis, but it is difficult to trace personal devotion and love. Such feelings would also be little appropriate towards a host of powerful beings without a pronounced personality. The god one loves, must himself have human feelings. The hymns are sacrificial songs, and a sacrifice can no doubt be performed in gratitude and devotion, but the aim is usually to obtain advantage and riches.

It was in man's daily life that the germs of devotional love could most easily develop. One of the causes was no doubt the devotion of the disciple towards his teacher, especially if the latter was a *yogin* But these instructors were so inclined to corporal punishment that the devotion often was mingled with fear More important was the army-leader's relationship to his soldiers, and it is significant that *bhakti*, the religion of devotion and love of god, can for the first time be traced in India among the kshatriyas, the prince- and warrior caste It is of course possible to think of similar features in other religious societies, but we cannot get further than to guesses

He who devotes himself to *bhakti* is designated as *bhakta* or *bhâgavata*, and the object of his devotion, with a personal colouring, *Bhagavân* The famous *Bhagavadgitâ*, which is incorporated in the gigantic epos Mahâbhârata, is the chief text-book of the bhakti religion. The god of bhakti is here *Krishna Vâsudeva* About 200 B C a Vâsudeva-temple is mentioned, and a short time later a Greek envoy raises a pillar for Vâsudeva, the god of the gods, and calls himself a *bhâgavata*

The tale of the Bhagavadgità is referred to the time just before the great battle, which forms the climax of the epos The hero Arjuna comes in his chariot with Krishna as his driver When he sees the hosts of his adversaries, including so many kinsmen and friends, he becomes despondent and throws his weapons away.

But Krishna takes him to task; he reminds him that what he has to fight against are the perishable bodies, the eternal soul he cannot hurt. To him, who has been born, death is unavoidable, and to him, who has died, new life comes One must not grieve about the inevitable, but do one's duty, and nothing is better for a warrior than a just fight. This Krishna explains from the viewpoint both of Sâmkhya and of Yoga. And he goes on.

III. 10 ff.: "When Prajâpati created the creatures together with the sacrifice, he said 'through this you shall propagate yourself, this shall be your wishing-cow. Support the gods through

this, and the gods will support you Mutually supporting each other you will obtain the highest bliss'".

III. 30 "Surrender all your actions to me, fight without hesitation, the thought directed towards me, without expectations and without desire"

IV 9 "He, who thus knows my divine birth and activity, he is not reborn when he has given up his body, he comes to me, Arjuna".

IV. 11 "As much as men search for me, as much I love them From all directions they follow my steps, O Arjuna

VI 31 "The yogin, who loves me as I am to be found in all beings, and he who stands firmly established in unity whereever he is to be found, he rests in me'

VI. 47· "And of all yogins I consider him as the foremost one who, with his inner eye directed towards me, loves me in true faith"

VII 8 "I am the taste in the water, Arjuna, the effulgence in moon and sun, the syllable *om* in all Vedas, sound in space, virility in man'

VII 17 "Best of all is he, the sage, who lives in continual effort, only filled with love of me, to the sage I am very dear, very dear to me is he"

VII 23 "But the fruits, those of little wisdom reap, are perishable; those, who perform sacrifices to the gods, come to the gods, those, who love me, come to me"

IX 26 "When a self-controlled man in love gives me a leaf, a fruit, a flower, or water, I take it, if it is given in love".

IX 30 ff. "Even if a very bad man loves me, and only me, he must be considered to be good, for he has made the right choice He will soon become right-minded and enter into eternal peace Know that, O Arjuna, he who loves me, will never perish"

X. 9 "When they, the thoughts directed towards me, instruct each other and speak about me, they are always content and happy".

XI 9. "Thus spoke Hari, the great Lord of Yoga, and showed Arjuna his highest divine form".

Here we have advanced to genuine bhakti, devotion to and love of God, the highest, the only eternal one, who on his side loves men Bhagavân, the Lord, reveals himself as Vishnu in the hero Krishna, and he it is, Vâsudeva, the son of Vasudeva, who is the god of the Greek bhâgavata in the inscription of the 2nd century B C mentioned above

It is evident that this worship, first of all, comes from the warrior-caste, but it has, in India, also played a considerable rôle in wider circles To the bhâgavatas it was the only way to salvation Sacrifice and actions, on which the brahmans laid great stress, were of small importance As we read in a later collection of verses "Embrace Govinda, you fool *(bhaja Govindam, bhaja Govindam mûdhamate)*, for when death has come near *(prâpte hi samnihite marane)*, the root "*dukrn*" *karane* (the grammarians' designation of the root *kri* "to do") does not effect anything" The meaning is clear no work, only devotional faith can help us in death.

In X 9 we read about the bhaktas instructing each other and talking to each other about Him Such talks have played a considerable rôle, combined with hymning (*kirtana*) and various kinds of acting

It cannot be doubted that the bhakti-religion has been one of the principal sources of what we find of monotheistic tendencies in India They also have their roots in the Vedic *rita* and in what Max Muller called Henotheism or Kathenotheism, in the notion of the all-pervading brahma and the soul, in the Içvara, Lord of the Yoga, in the philosophical schools' proofs of God's existence, but above all in the full development of the bhakti-religion

It was the hero-warrior Krishna who revealed himself as the highest god in the Bhagavadgitâ But another conception of Krishna became of greater importance in Hinduism, Khishna as a child

and as a young boy Krishna "the black, the dark" occurs as the name of one of the poets of the Rigveda and of a Vedic teacher in the Brahmana period, and more than one person may have born this name Krishna Vâsudeva has then, according to the traditional conception, been a hero of the Sâtvata tribe which seems to have had its home in the Panjâb and the country between the Ganges and the Jamna.

The traditions about his birth and childhood have been localized in Mathurâ, and here we find at the present day temples which attract numerous pilgrims and visitors.

In Mathurâ the cruel Kansa ruled, and he worried and oppressed pious people A heavenly voice prophesied that a boy, born by Devakî, was to make an end of his rule Kansa therefore issued orders that all children, she gave birth to, should be killed His father Vasudeva, however, succeeded in saving the new-born Krishna, laying another child in his place, and carried the boy across the flooded Jamna (like Christophorus carrying the child Jesus), the water gradually sinking as he went along, so that the boy's feet did not touch it This is the Mathurâ wonder which is so often represented in brass

The child was then entrusted to the care of the herdsman Nanda and his wife Yaçodâ, and grew up in play and merriment with the herdsman's children Many a prank and mad frolic is mentioned and also many vigorous feats, stories which have found their way into an apocryphal gospel He was the intimate friend of the young girls, and above all he acted as the lover of fair Râdhâ, and everybody was fond and proud of him

When then the proper time came, he killed Kansa and made an end of his tyranny.

These tales became very popular in India at an early date, and myths and fairy-tales were woven into them. Through the identification of Krishna and Vishnu the door has been thrown wide open to a religious lyric where the love between Krishna and Râdhâ has become the picture of God's relations to the

soul. The Indians' intimate understanding of the child's mental life, and their love of their children found expression in the description of little Krishna's life among the herdsmen

How old these tales and conceptions are, we do not know Some people have thought that the belief in a child-god, or God descending in a little child, is due to Christian influence, and in this connection some stress has been laid on the fact that the name Krishna is sometimes pronounced *krishta* However we have every reason for thinking that these Indian tales are older than Christianity

We can easily understand that the tales about the childish love-play between Krishna and Râdhâ could get the stamp of real erotism, such as love easily assumes in India That was especially the case in Mathurâ and in Bengal The love of God was viewed in the likeness of love between man and woman in the world, and we sometimes have the feeling of having to do with genuine sensual love-poems, *e g* often in Jayadeva's glorious Gîtâgovinda (12th cent A D) Real dissipation is not unknown We hear about female members of the sect offering themselves to the men without reserve And as in Çivaism the god's consort often plays a greater rôle than the god, Krishnabhakti easily develops into Râdhâbhakti In the *Sakhîbhâva* sect the men thus dress themselves as women, as the girl-friends *(sakhî)* of Râdhâ.

But the essential thing in Krishnabhakti is the sincere devotion to God, and all deviations have consistently been disclaimed by the religious leaders They only prove the truth of Sâmkhya's teaching, that man is under the influence of matter, and in matter there is not only the true pure element, *sattva*, but also passion, *rajas*, and blindness, *tamas*.

The conception that God has come down in human shape is old in India, and it is especially connected with Vishnu. We read already in the Bhagavadgitâ that he is born anew, in every age of the world, and when evil gets the upper hand in the world, he comes and renders his help.

We hear about more than one such *avatâra*, descent Once he appeared as a dwarf, *vâmana*, in the war between gods and demons (*asuras*) The gods were being defeated, but they were

A young boy acting as Krishna

promised as much of the earth as the dwarf could pace out in three steps. But he grew greater and greater and finally paced out the whole earth.

The religions of India 11

In other "descents" we find Vishnu as a tortoise (*kurma*) bearing the world, as a boar *(varâha)* raking up the Earth from the water, as a fish *(matsya)*, who saves Manu, the primordial man, from the Flood, as a Lion-man (*Narasimha*), who tears an evil demon to pieces, and in a future time he will finally appear as *Kalkin* and make an end to the rule of the barbarians.

The Avatâra-conception has occasionally proved useful when foreign elements were to be incorporated in Hinduism. Thus we hear about a tribe whose totem was a boar. It became hinduized and continued to worship the boar as Vishnu's Varaha avatâra, which was of course the natural thing to do. Then it became muhammedanized — the boar remained — as Father Abraham where it is not so easy to follow the trend of this thought.

Even the Buddha and Christ are mentioned among the Avataras of Vishnu. In the case of the latter, this seemed partly to be due to the fact that Krishna is also pronounced *Krishta*, and with regard to the Buddha, this conception helps us to understand why the Buddhists gave up their apparent reluctance against representing the Buddha otherwise than through symbols, and asked their Greek, or perhaps rather Eurasian, artists to give them images of the Lord himself.

In the Bhagavadgitâ we read that in reality it is one and the same God who is worshipped in all religions, but there is also another explanation which is sometimes given. Vishnu descends in order to lead the evil ones astray and prevent them from being saved, a conception which in reality is in direct contrast to the whole bhakti theory.

The number of Vishnu-avataras is given in different figures, from six and up to 28.

In the gatherings of the Bhaktas hymns of praise, dancing, and music play an important rôle, and the life of Krishna as a boy is represented in a cultic drama, where a young boy is acting as Krishna.

Beside Krishna it is especially Râma who is worshipped as an avatâra of Vishnu.

Râma is certainly the hero of an old saga, and in the older parts of the ancient epos Ramayana he is mainly acting as a human being. The contents of the tale about him are as follows:

King Daçaratha in Ayodhya, the present Audh in the United Provinces, had chosen his eldest son Rama as his successor, but in a heedless moment he had promised one of his queens to grant her any wish she might make. Now she came and asked him to make her son Bharata heir of the throne, and to banish Râma for fourteen years.

The king could not break his promise and Râma did not know any higher duty than to be obedient to his father. Though he was the people's favourite, he willingly left Ayodhya, accompanied by his faithful wife Sita, and his brother Lakshmana.

They went southwards into Southern India, and became the friends of the monkey prince Hanumân, and many were the things that happened to them. Some have maintained that we can, in these tales, find recollections of the diffusion of the Aryan culture to Southern India and its meeting with tribes who worshipped the monkey as a totem.

We are further told how Sitâ was abducted from him by the ogre king Râvana and brought to his castle in *Lankâ*, which is identified with Ceylon(?). But she remained faithful to Râma, and in the end the two were reunited through the help of Hanumân, and Râvana was slain. Now the fourteen years were also at an end, and Râma, with his companions, returned to Ayodhyâ, and was anointed as king after his father, who in the meantime had died from grief.

Such is the old tale, which in the course of time has been told over and over again, and which still, in our own days, occupies an important place in India's devotional literature. New traits

have been added by poets, and already in the first centuries of our era Râma was considered an incarnation of the highest God

It is his obedience and his scrupulous sticking to his duty which form the starting point, and which from the very beginning have stamped him as the true *bhakta*. And *Sitâ* was considered as the ideal of a faithful wife, while Hanumân became the type

Hanuman

of unselfish devotion, bhakti itself When we then bear in mind that the human soul, according to the prevailing opinion, is identical with God, we understand that a halo could be placed around those in whom the good, which is divine, comes most clearly to the front. Such people were themselves divine. Thus Râma became an incarnation of Vishnu, and it was Vishnu's consort, Lakshmi or Çrî, who revealed herself in Sitâ.

In this way, Râma and Sitâ came to occupy an ever increasing

place in the people's consciousness But we cannot with certainty prove the existence of a regular cult till much later. It is only about the 11th century that such a one is met with, but that does hardly signify more than that then it became adopted by the higher classes After that time their importance grows greater and greater, and also Hanumân emerges into the foreground, and in our days he is one of India's most popular gods.

Figures such as Râma, Sitâ, and Hanumân were prominently suited to the bhakti-religion, with their strong devotion to duty and self-control, and they have also become central figures in the later development And while bhakti, when directed towards Krishna and Râdhâ, occasionally led to dissipation in erotical feelings, Râma, Sita and Hanumân have always preserved the stamp of ethical purity In them God reveals himself to man and shows how adherence to duty, purity, unselfish devotion wins everything and leads to happiness

Further development of Vishnuism
Râmânuja

During the time from the beginning of our era and down to the Muhammedan conquest, we notice how learned thinkers continued to work with the various systems of religious philosophy We can follow the development of logical and atomistic schools, as we can also see that there were some too who sought the aim of life in itself and did not think of anything higher

At the same time, it is evident that the belief in the great gods, Vishnu and Çiva, got greater and greater hold on the minds, and, in melting together with the bhakti conception, acquired an ever strengthening position in the people's life of religious feeling. The theories of knowledge in religious philosophy gradually melted together with these conceptions, and in the so-called Purânas the philosophical speculation was made to serve the belief in gods

The people itself could not rest content with abstract thinking, and its concepts gradually colour the thinking itself The personal conception of omnipotence asserted itself more and more

Religions such as Jainism and Buddhism lost their hold on the minds, and the attempt which Çamkara made to prove that the impersonal omnipotence, brahma, was the only reality, because everything else, right up to the gods, was only a great *mâyâ*, an illusion, did not satisfy later thinkers Some influence we may perhaps attribute to Islam with its strong accentuation of the personal concept of God and to the weakening it caused the Brahmanic ortodoxy But still more important the teachings of bhakti would be The leading thought in this is just man's pious acceptance of God's will and his love of God It presupposes necessarily a doubleness, a *dvaita*, and cannot well be consistent with the monistic teaching about *advaita*, non-doubleness

As already indicated the bhâgavatas might base themselves on certain passages in the sacred tradition, and in support of their point of view they certainly believed to be standing on the foundations of the Upanishads They therefore had to react against Çamkara's perception according to which those passages of the Upanishads, which might be quoted in support of a god as the ruler of the world, belonged to the lower, exoteric instruction destined for the broad mass of the people To break with the adherence to the Vedas did not occur to them just as little as it did to the adherents of Samkhya These were and remained the highest authority for all Hindus, the important thing was to interpret them correctly. We know but little of how the philosophical interpretation of the Upanishads has developed in the centuries following next after Vedânta had got its systematical manual in Brahmasûtra This work itself became the great authority, which was then made the object of commentaries, and it can scarcely be doubted that different schools came into being within Vedânta.

The oldest of these which we know through its principal books,

is Çamkara's school, and this school had no small influence on the leading Vedântists But it has not been the only recognized one, and, more especially, it cannot have had much authority among the adherents of the bhakti doctrine

These maintain that their interpretation is an old tradition, which has been inherited from teacher to pupil. Also here we have several schools, and the one that first got decisive importance traces its tradition back to Vishnu-Bhagavân's consort Çrî, and is therefore called the *Çrisampradâya*, the tradition of Çrî.

The teacher whose work became fundamental for this school was the Brahman Râmânuja, who lived in Conjeeveram and was born in the Çaka year 938 (1016—17) He first worked under a teacher of Çamkara's school, but soon became influenced by the Vishnuite bhakti school, and separated himself from his teacher, in order to concentrate himself on the literature which had developed among the Vaishnavas, especially among the socalled *Alvârs*, who in their teaching stressed the love and devotion to Vishnu A teacher of this school became his guide, and at his death Râmânuja became his successor in Çrirangam at Trichinopoly

It is told that his predecessor asked him to compile a new interpretation of the Brahmasûtra, and this, the so-called *Çribhâshya*, and Râmânuja's interpretation of the Bhagavadgitâ, and his systematic works have become fundamental in that revival of the non-Muhammedan Indians' religion, Hinduism, which begins in the 11th century

Râmânuja's system, to some extent, wears the impress of the school he had first belonged to, and has been characterized as a modified monism, *Viçishtâdvaita*, with a strong personal stamp on the conceptions of omnipotence. The individual souls and the material world are the attributes and body of *Içvara*, the highest soul, and Içvara, the Lord, is their inner leader, *antaryâmin*. Before creation he exists in a subtle form, which then develops itself into the Universe, and he is what accomplishes

everything, creation, maintenance, and annihilation In a celestial body of incomparable beauty he is enthroned in Vaikuntha, with Lakshmî at his side, and he is invoked under many names In his hand lie the attributes mythology ascribes to Vishnu, to his surroundings belongs Vishnu's mount the eagle Garuda, and his throne appears as the serpent Çesha, which in so many representations forms his restingplace It is evident that popular conceptions have here been combined with the brahman of the Upanishads, which has, in this way, been transformed into a personal almighty god

The supreme god reveals himself in various ways, and he also dwells in the hearts of men, where the yogin visualizes him in trance, and also in images and statues As it is already said in the Bhagavadgitâ God is the same in all religions and in all images

Also the individual souls are eternal, endowed with the faculty of consciousness and cognition, but subjected to God's control So far as they are not redeemed, they are *baddha*, bound in *samsâra*, the current of existences, but when seeking God in *bhakti*, they can reach salvation

Not everybody, however, reaches the goal in this way, and this is especially the case with çûdras, members of the fourth caste Pious acts and self-discipline must be replaced by *prapatti*, simple devotion, through which he, who takes refuge in God, feels his helplessness and throws himself in God's arms

This prapatti is pure bhakti, and is is interesting to note that Râmânuja, in placing the çûdras in a separate position, has not been able to free himself from old prejudices.

His school has still many adherents in Southern India Among them there are two schools, the northern *Vadakalai*, and the southern *Tenkalai* The former sees the relation between God and the man who seeks salvation in the image of a female monkey carrying her young, who clings to her; the other one compares the relation by referring to a she-cat, who carries her

kitten without its doing anything in order to hold itself in place. In the same way, the soul can cling to God or leave everything to Him and His mercy

Such and other minor differences are, however, of small importance What Râmânuja has done is to highten the popular conceptions and to give them a foundation in the holy tradition, and thereby secure them recognition by the leading spiritual circles.

Other bhakti teachers Krishna in the bhakti religion.

Râmânuja's teaching was, as we have seen, a monism, God being also conceived as the material cause of the world. Others, on the other hand, laid stress on the difference between God and the individual souls and matter, and the manifoldness of all which is not God This brings us back to the Sâmkhya dualism, to the assumption of a duality (dvaita), and is therefore called dvaitamata, the school of duality The foremost teacher of this was Madhva or Ânandatîrtha whose school leads its tenets back to the god Brahmâ for which reason it is also called Brahmasampradâya, Brahmâ's tradition

Madhva was born near Udipi in South Kanara in the year 1119 or 1199, and when 79 years old he died he had gathered round him a considerable following of disciples and adherents To Madhva Vishnu is a personal omnipotent god who rules everything, and who lets Brahmâ create the world in which he then reveals himself in various ways. On the other side there are the innumerable individual souls who are bound by their karman which may drive them forward in hate against God with the damnation resulting from this, or through good actions to participation in God's merciful selection

By the side of these two Madhva then places matter in all its manifestations God's mercy is necessary for salvation, and this must be won through divine worship. In this connection we hear of pilgrimages and sacrifices, of hymns of praise (samkîrtana)

as well as of study of the Vedas under the guidance of a teacher In Madhva's school the personality of the teacher plays an important rôle, and this trait we find again also with other Vishnuites If one worships God in this way and draws oneself nearer

Caitanya

to Him faith becomes a living power which leads to complete dependence on and fervent love of God Through concentration and personal devotion the soul can then advance to beholding Vishnu, and the fetters of karman fall away

Madhva's sect has also its adherents in the North, and here it seems to have made considerable progress in recent times Here

it has assimilated itself with the worship of Krishna, in Bengal, e g, we have an offshoot where this relationship is very prominent.

It goes back to Caitanya, who was born in Nadiyâ in 1485 and whom his adherents considered as an incarnation of Krishna himself He reproved all worship with works and all ritualism, and taught faith and love of Hari, i e Vishnu, as the only way to salvation At the public gatherings songs of praise played a prominent rôle Caitanya himself and his followers had often raptures of ecstasy and fainting-fits He was sometimes met with derision and sneers, his adherents were however numerous.

To Caitanya Krishna is the Highest, full of beauty so that all must love him, and revealing himself in many shapes In Goloka, the highest heaven, he carries on his play of eternal joy Love is his essence, and in its purity it reveals itself as Râdhâ Man's soul can be filled by the same love and in ecstasy coalesce with God, from whom it originally differed

In modern times we often hear in Bengal about the so-called *bâuls*, madmen, who in full devotion sing about God and His glory "My longing is to meet Thee in love's play, my lover, the longing which is in me and in Thee For Thy lips must smile and Thy flute must have its tune. Thou rejoicest in my love, and therefore Thou art importunate, just as I

I am sitting here at the road-side, frail is my body

Can Thy love be complete without me, am I too small for Thee to notice, I shall retire

It is good that I am a vessel of clay, that is not filled,

for when Thou swims, I can float at Thy side.

The full vessels Thou lets remain on the busy shore, they are for use,

but I am carried to the river in Thy arms, and I dance to the rhythm

of Thy heart's beating and the rippling of the waves".

These bâul songs have found their way to Calcutta's drawing rooms. But more important is their significance for the simple

Bengali, who listen wholeheartedly when a Bâul sings about how God sends his glorious invitation to the singer as His only guest. And there is a common feeling and unity in longings and aims As a Bâul said to me "If thou seekest God in sincerity, thou art my brother, whatever religion thou belongest to".

Krishna and Râdhâ are also the centres of other North-Indian bhakti sects. In the 12th century, *e g*, we have Nimbârka, who mostly worked in Mathurâ, and in his interpretation of the Brahmasûtra maintained what has been called a *dvaitâdvaita*, a dualistic monism, according to which the soul is, indeed, different from God, but belongs to Him as the waves to the Ocean God is inconceivable, but reveals himself in Nature's book, where the objects are the letters, and Krishna is his highest form of appearance.

In Mathurâ worked also another teacher of bhakti, who became of great importance for the school which devoted its worship exclusively to Krishna and Râdhâ, viz *Vallabha* or *Vallabhâcârya* He was born in 1479, and his father represented a South-Indian sect, the so-called *Rudrasampradâya*, i e. Rudra's tradition, which maintained that is was derived from the god Rudra-Çiva Vallabha's adherents are rather numerous in the Mathurâ region and among business-people in Gujarât and Râjputâna

This school represents a return to Çamkara's monism, and is known as the *Çuddhâdvaitamata*, the doctrine of pure non-duality. Krishna is the highest brahman, and is the material cause of the world All difference is *mâyâ*, illusion, and also the individual soul is an atom of brahman Reality *(sat)*, knowledge *(cit)*, and joy *(ânanda)* are the essence of brahman and of the soul, but the soul can only reach its aim through *bhakti*, devotion, which lets it share God's eternal happiness and joy, through self-castigation and worship of God, or through God's grace *(pushti)*

Krishna himself can, under the influence of the component parts of his essence, reveal himself in various ways, as Brahmâ when he creates the world, as Vishnu when he upholds it, and as

Çiva when he again dissolves it. But in his highest form, as *Purushottama*, the highest person, he is enthroned in Vaikuntha, in eternal bliss and play with Radha. There he receives those who are saved, and who get their share in his bliss, as shepherds and shepherdesses in his company.

The sect has evolved a manifold cult. The believers go to the temple, awaken Krishna and Radha, carry their images out, prostrate themselves before them, and offer refreshments to them, while lamps are swung and bells sounding. It is a ceremonial which is apt to impress the masses, but which has also led to dissipations, when the erotical moment in the conception of God becomes more strongly stressed.

The different bhakti schools can be characterized as different churches, each with its foundation in a different interpretation of the Brahmasutra and other sources. Therefore the *guru*, the teacher, and his ideas play a considerable rôle. The lay people yield blindly to him, whether he lives as a homeless ascetic or, as is the case in certain schools, is married and is surrounded by family. To some extent we find that the older preachers live in monasteries, *mathas*, under a *mahant*, abbot, who often disposes of considerable temple-property.

Other teachers of bhakti

It was learned thinkers who led the schools which we have learnt to know hitherto. They were, it is true, influenced by the popular belief in God, but they based their teaching on the old tradition. That was partly also the case with people such as Caitanya, though he reminds us more of our lay preachers, and though his hymns were composed in dialect.

The bhakti conceptions, however, gradually spread to broader and broader strata and left their traces in the worship of the many popular deities, and we meet with popular preachers who, in connection with the cult of their home land, rose to the

belief in One almighty God, who in his mercy receives the human beings, and whom they approach in devotion and love Through them this doctrine spread to the masses and became a popular religious conception

It is not irreasonable to assume that Islam has contributed to make the way easier for these popular teachers, who did not know Sanskrit and could not benefit by the veneration the people had become accustomed to show towards the bearers of the tradition For Islam must necessarily lead to a shaking up of the old society, and impair the belief that only the brahmans could be the people's teachers And as Islam itself did not accept caste, it was bound to strengthen the tendencies contained in the bhakti doctrine to open the door for all seekers of the truth, irrespective of caste or race

It was, however, just in those districts which Islam had not been able to subdue, that the new conception first most clearly came to light, especially among the Marathas, who long held their own against the Muhammedans, and still during the British period gathered together under national leaders There we early find an emancipation from traditional formalism and a strong religious revival, which has no doubt contributed to strengthen the people in their national feeling and to give them self respect and self reliance

Already the teaching of the Bhagavadgita inculcates energetic work in the manifold tasks of life, and not in the first line obedience towards the brahman and the teacher It is a more virile religious conception than that which the Buddha taught

At the end of the 13th century we find in the Maratha country an interpretation of the Bhagavadgita in the people's own language, which was bound to contribute considerably to make its teaching the people s property And there, in 1270, a poet and teacher was born, who was destined to exercise a great influence

Nâmdev was his name, and he lived in Pandharpûr on the

Bhîma river, where Vishnu was worshipped in a famous temple under the name of *Vitthal* or *Vithobâ* He was here worshipped as Krishna, but not as the young boy who sports with the beloved Râdhâ, but as an earnest god And at his side sat *Rukmini*, a revelation of Vishnu's celestial queen Lakshmi.

It was before the image of Vitthal that Nâmdev bent down, but to him the image was not God Nowhere is found a place, he says, where God is not present Through His power the clouds give rain, the hills stand firm, and the wind blows Pilgrimage, fasting, asceticism, all are useless; only through repentance and abandoning the love of one's self, pride, desire, and anger, through furthering peace and tolerance in the heart, through being watchful and praising God's name, and firmly maintaining the love for Him, man is admitted to His society, and then He reveals Himself to him One must not turn away from life, but worship God there, for there He is present full of power

Nâmdev was not a learned man, his family lived as tailors and clothiers Namdev has not given us any systematic works, from which we can reconstruct his teaching, but his plain songs in Marâthi and Hindi still live on the people's lips and in the people's hearts and have exercised great influence, above all in stressing that life and worship of God are one and the same thing

Beside Nâmdev and after him, others have worked in a similar way in the Marâtha country, and one of them was of a similar importance, *viz* the poet *Tukârâm*, who lived in the first half of the 17th century

Also he belonged to Vitthal's congregation in Pandharpûr, and also he did not belong to the higher castes He was a trader, but early devoted himself to the study of the literature in his dialect, and he became filled with the spirit of bhakti He worshipped Vitthal, but in full consciousness of it being the Almighty God of the whole world who resided in Vitthal's temple

Peace and rest are only to be found with God, says Tukârâm, and in order to find the way to Him he tried to free himself

from all lust and desire, from all passion. He was on his guard against everything that was connected with egoism or self-assertion, and above all against becoming dazzled by his own fame when people began to gather about him and to honour him. When the Marâtha ruler Çivâji sent a splendent suite in order to summon him to his presence, he refused to come. Piety and humility, combined with altruism, were the prevailing traits in his individuality, and the love of God was all and everything to him: "This Thy nature cannot be grasped by thought or by words, and therefore I take the devotion in love as my measuring staff". His I and everything that was his he joyfully renounced, and the thought of death filled him with happiness "I have behold my own death with my own eyes, and the result was incomparable rapture The three worlds are filled with happiness, and I have enjoyed it as the All-Soul As long as I felt myself as an individual, I was limited to one place, but now I have given up that feeling, I can go everywhere."

Thus Tukârâm lived, and thus he sang. His influence in his own time was great, and his poems and his thoughts have kept their power over the minds He did not found a school of his own, he died as he had lived, as a devoted worshipper of Vitthal in Pandharpûr, but his faith and his teaching were universal in their conception of God.

Nâmdev and Tukârâm were chiefly important for their homeland, though Nâmdev's poems were also widely spread in Northern India. A successor of Râmânuja, the brahman *Râmânanda*, who probably lived in the 14th century, did, however, more than anybody else for the propagation of the religion of bhakti among the common people

He broke with his teacher, because he reacted against the privileges which Râmânuja's school in many ways accorded to the brahman caste, and because he did not approve of the many orthodox regulations about what one had to abstain from and with whom one could eat together. To him all Vishnu's wor-

shippers were equally good, whichever caste rank they might belong to.

He did not think it was his concern to found his belief on a learned interpretation of the tradition, but to proclaim it to the people. Therefore he also ceased to teach and to write in Sanskrit, but addressed the people in their own language

His fundamental conceptions were otherwise in many respects the same as Râmânuja's, an adaptation of monism, with a strongly personal conception of the deity, and he laid no less stress on the love and devotion to God than his predecessors.

But he had grown up in Benares, in a different *milieu*, where the tales about Râma had their home. To him, therefore, Râma became the God one should seek through bhakti.

This became important for the development of bhakti For the moral purity which characterizes the conception of Râma and Sitâ largely contributed to keep the bhakti religion of Northern India free from the tendencies which partly filled the worship of Krishna and Râdhâ

Through Râmânanda and his successors the worship of Râma was spread over Northern and Central India and in many ways superseded the cult of Krishna

Râmânanda's disciples came from different castes and classes One was a Râjput, another a barber, a third a leather-worker, a fourth a weaver and, according to the tradition, originally a Muhammedan

Just this last one, the poet and preacher *Kabîr*, is one of the central figures in Râmânanda's school. His teaching is laid down in a series of writings which have held their own in the people's devotion down to our own days. It objects to ceremonies and quite neglects caste, it also objects to the *advaita* theory that there is no difference between God and the human soul

Râma, God, is the father of all, and tries to draw them to Himself and abandon every other desire than to become His. He is spirit and cannot be worshipped in images or symbols,

but prayers are the means of coming near to Him. And there all who believe in God can meet, be they Hindus or Muhammedans.

Kabîr's adherents are mainly to be found among the lower castes, but his name is honoured by all Vishnuites.

He was also of great importance for the *Sikhs*, who with their rejection of the sacred tradition and their negative attitude towards caste, have been considered as non-Hindus

The word *Sikh* means "pupil", and the Sikhs have, like most teachers of *bhakti*, strongly underlined the importance of the teacher, and the duty to obey him, the *guru*

The founder of Sikhism, the guru *Nânak*, was born in the neighbourhood of Lahore in 1469. He came under the influence of Kabir's teaching and began to proclaim a religion which laid the principal stress on moral purity and the oneness of God

Before his death he nominated his successor, and this custom was followed until the fifth guru, *Arjuna* (1581--1606) made the position hereditary, and also began to act as a worldly ruler of the society and devoted himself to politics This led to war against the Muhammedan rulers, and during these fights the sect developed into a military theocracy, to the party of God, or *Khâlsâ*, as it was usually called Under the tenth, and last guru, *Govind* (1651—1708) the Khâlsâ was further organized Its members were authorized to adopt the designation *Singh*, "lion", to don a uniform, and all nearer association with disbelievers was forbidden. The members of the Khâlsâ became soldiers, and their task was the sacred war against the Muhammedans, from whom this idea itself may have been borrowed.

The Sacred Book of the Sikhs, the *Âdi Granth*, is mainly written in an old form of Panjâbî, called *Gurmukhî*, i. e. what has proceeded from the mouth of the gurus It contains sayings of the different gurus, and of men such as Nâmdev, Râmânanda, and Kabir, and when Govind was lying on his death-bed he abolished the guruship and ordered that in future the Âdi

Granth should be the guru, a decision which reminds us of the Buddha's final words to his disciples

Âdi Granth, or *Granth Sâhib*, "The Book, the Lord", is therefore also regarded with a veneration which is not far removed from adoration, and in the Sikh temples, above all in the Golden Temple of Amritsar, it is the centre of devotion

Tulsî Das

The Sikh sect is, however, only loosely connected with the bhakti religion, which generally acknowledges the Indian tradition The bhakti doctrine itself has gradually developed into the leading force in Northern Indian religion and has also great influence in Southern India

Among its popular leaders there is scarcely anybody who in importance can be compared with *Tulsî Dâs* He was born in a brahman family in 1532, but was turned out by his parents.

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A *Sâdhu*, a pious wanderer, took care of him and took him along on his wanderings.

Tulsi Dâs has embodied his conception of life in a series of works in the Audh dialect, above all in his *Râmâyan*, "the book about Râma", written in Audh and Benares in the years after 1574. This book is for millions of Hindus the sum-total of the highest truth and is embraced with unexampled devotion and admiration A quotation from it is often the best way to opening the door to the heart of the Hindu

It describes Râma's life on earth, but it never forgets that Râma is God. Nevertheless we get a deeply human impression from the narrative, and especially the years, when he was a child, are described in sympathetic understanding of a child's emotional life.

Just through this description of Râma's life on earth Tulsi Das has been able to make such a strong appeal to the hearts What the kernel of his preaching is, is that man's life should be wholly filled and permeated by the love and devotion which is the chief thing in the bhakti religion. Here Râma himself, the highest God, becomes the great model for imitation. The example, he set in his life, is so much the more apt to induce imitation, because Tulsi has made his person so human, described it so that the Indians feel their hearts beat in sympathy and let themselves be pervaded by the childish grace and the deep love which fills the description.

Çivaism

We have thought to have been able to follow one unbroken line from the Upanishads and the Bhagavadgitâ down to the Vishnuite bhakti religion, under the continuous influence of the different philosophical schools We have also been able to see how the personal conception of God could always assert itself and in the end carried the day, certainly because it was in accordance with the people's views.

It is above all the view of the religious leaders we have had a glimpse of; we know less about the daily cults and worship of the gods among the bulk of the population. Animistic conceptions and all kinds of ceremonies, aiming at keeping evil forces away and at supporting, helping, or producing the good ones, have here occupied a broad space Innumerable are the forces and powerful beings one had to take into consideration

We have heard about rivers and lakes, above all the Ganges, about fire, about trees, about sacred animals and dangerous animals; about holy and powerful men, about local and special deities, etc And beside of all this, which might, in a way, seem to be endowed with life, there are also other things The peasant prays to his plough, the fisher to his net, the weaver to his loom, and the banker to his ledger. The picture is extremely variegated, but it is, nevertheless, not quite right to stamp the Indians as polytheists The conception of oneness we find already in the Vedic *rita*, the *brahman* of the *Upanishads*, the so-called henotheism, and in the conception of the *ishtadevatâ*, the individual's separate deity But *devatâ* is not quite the same thing as *deva*, god, but rather "being a god", a special apparition of the divine, and when other forms of appearance are at play, it is not the special *ishtadevatâ* which is invoked. The Hindu conception of God is rather a common denominator, in which polytheism as well as monotheism may be included

If we then leave out of account the many varieties and stick to the great principal sects, it is still the striving after oneness which strikes us. We observe how many divine figures group themselves around a central god or become denominations of him And he becomes more powerful than all the others and easily, as we have seen in Vishnuism, the only one.

Beside Vishnu and his apparitions, the old Vedic gods are reduced to shadows. Only Rudra-Çiva remains as his equal, and he has, as we have seen, earlier roots in India than the Aryans and the Vedas, *viz* in the ancient Indus Civilization.

Ganeśa

In him it is the terrific, the wild and horrible, which from the very beginning is most prominent He is the god one fears, while Vishnu is the god one loves He is surrounded by a host *(gana)* of serving beings, and the master or lord of these hosts, *Gana-*

pati or *Ganeça*, has acquired an almost independent position as one of the most popular gods of Hinduism.

But also the conception of Çiva has got a new stamp through the development of the centuries and the systems of religious philosophy, and he has been made the object of bhakti. Already the grammarian *Patañjali*, in the second century B.C., mentions a Çiva-bhâgavata sect

Already in the Atharvaveda Rudra has become the lord of life and death, and often he melts together with Agni, the god of fire In the Yajurveda he appears with names which later on become common. Içvara, Mahâdêva ("the Great God") etc. In one of these texts, the so-called Çatarudrîya, which also exists in the form of an Upanishad, he has entirely the stamp of a popular god We have already heard that he is the ruler of the often uncanny ganas, he is also invoked to guard house and field, people and cattle — he is, we know, also *Paçupati*, the master of cattle

He is the god of artisans and the patron of merchants and traders; he protects the armorers, nay even thieves and robbers. As the French scholar Barth says "The conceptions 'soldier' and 'bandit' sometimes coincide"

Çiva is further the lord of ascetics and yogins, being himself the prototype of the yogin, and he it is who protects learning and science, grammar and logic

We hear already in early times that he is to be found in uncanny places, at crossroads, in cemeteries, in forests and fields, and in the hills. Here he practises asceticism, ugly-looking, the body smeared with ashes, skulls arranged as a wreath round his neck, and an animal-hide round his shoulders, just like the ascetics of this world. As *Bhairava*, "the terrible", he dances the wild *tândava* dance, and he is the great dancer, *Mahânata*, the protector of the professional dancers, and when their art developed into the Indian drama *(nâtaka)*, he became its patron.

In the *Mahâbhârata* he is very prominent; he becomes

Mahâkâla, Illimited Time, and is surrounded also by other hosts than the ganas, such as *Skanda*, the god of war, *Kubera*, the god of riches, and others, but his nearest companion is his consort, the goddess with the many names, together with whom he is often represented as *Ardhanârîçvara*, "the half-female lord"

Here we meet with a type quite different from that of Vishnu, and also the cults have a different stamp One rather tries to come to terms with him than to worship him. And nevertheless he is *Çiva*, the "merciful", who can heal all wounds and keep disease and illness away, and, as we have seen, he is *Paçupati*, "the lord of cattle", and he himself is seated on the bull *Nandi*, his mount

As the great prototype of ascetics he is above lust and desire, and when the gods sent the daughter of Himavat, *Pârvati*, in order to tempt him to interrupt his asceticism, and gave her *Kâma*, the god of love, as a companion, Çiva burnt him to ashes, so that he became *Ananga* "bodiless", a fairy-tale which was probably invented in order to explain this designation of Kâma, which originally probably meant "anointer", with a sexual colouring.

Nevertheless Çiva is the bearer of the force which appears in creation, in the begetting of children, and the symbol under which he is so often worshipped is the oblong, rounded *linga*, which we know even from our own northern countries

As we have seen, the female element plays a prominent rôle in the worship of Çiva, and here we have probably to do with an old inheritance from the Indus Civilization Rudra's consort *Rudrâni* plays, already in Vedic times, a greater rôle than other goddesses, and later on she becomes more and more prominent. She has many names, such as Pârvati, Durga, Umâ Mahâdevi, Kâlî, etc., and has often a wild, terrific stamp, and it is evident that several local deities have coalesced with her

In her figure especially we meet with a conception which has been widely spread in Hinduism, namely that of the *çakti* or

potency of the individual gods. The Vedic Indra is *Çakra*, powerful, *Çacipati*, the lord of power, and from this denomination was developed the conception of his consort *Çacî*. She is essentially the same thing as *çakti*, power, faculty, and this faculty was, with the different gods, the potency of which they were them-

Çiva and Parvati

selves the bearers. The word is a femininum, and it became customary to personify the god's çakti as a female being, standing at his side as his queen. Brahma has his Sarasvati, Vishnu has Lakshmi, but above all it is Çiva's çakti, which became important for the further development. She becomes a cosmic potency in her personification as the terrible goddess with the many names, and

still she is the powerful protectress of her worshippers, the Great Mother, whom the Bengalis invoke in their national hymn *Bande mâtaram* "I praise our Mother".

Such are the fundamental features of the figure of Çiva, which then, in different sects, has been influenced bv tendencies already known to us.

In an Upanishad called Çvetâçvatara Hara (Çiva) has taken the place of the pantheistic brahman He rules the world and the souls, and by abandoning oneself to him one conquers ignorance and wins salvation

Sâmkhya and Yoga have influenced some sects Çiva is different from the souls and from eternal matter When the soul allies itself with matter it comes under the law of karman and becomes an animal (paçu) which cannot find its way back to its master, Çiva paçupati In the sect of the Pâçupatas Çiva is pure spirit and, through his çakti, is master of the fate of men Salvation is sought through Yoga and various actions, such as rubbing oneself with ashes, singing, dancing and mimic exercises.

In other systems Çiva acts under the influence of the souls' karman, which drives him to unfold his çakti. The paçu, the soul, which is in itself eternal, can be absorbed into him and reach salvation.

In other systems again the Vedântic conception of the soul's oneness with God is prevailing, thus in Kashmir, where we hear about learned Çivaites, from the 9th century and onwards God creates the world from nothing, and it is in reality not different from Him, but develops itself as if it were, as a reflection in a mirror, while God himself remains unimpressed, like the mirror by the reflection

The soul forgets, in this God's display of His *mâyâ*, the great cosmic illusion, that it is in reality identical with God. But in self-concentration it succeeds in seing the truth. In the so-called *Pratyabhijñâ* school this vision is described as a recognition *(pratyabhijñâ)*

The view of Vedânta is also dominating in the *Lingâyata* sect, whose symbol is the *linga* It has its own interpretation of the Brahmasûtra. It is Çiva who is brahman and consists of reality *(sat)*, thought *(cit)*, and bliss *(ânanda)* He divides himself into *linga* (God) and *anga* (the individual soul), and produces the world He is to be found in bhakti, but this bhakti is essentially an inclination towards God which leads to Yoga and renouncement of the world But also the effort to acquire superhuman faculties for the sake of the life on earth is often very prominent

A great number of the Yogins, who wander about in India, are, on the whole, Çivaites They rub themselves with ashes, they use a skull as vessel for food and drink, the so-called *kâpâlikas* or *kâlamukhas*, they wear a rosary *(rudrâksha)* round the neck; they dress, or do not dress, in an unusual and often repellent way, etc We find them sitting in the glowing sun between four flaming fires, they lie down on beds covered with pointed nails, they stand, their arms raised until they wither, etc They are often considered to possess supernatural faculties, and many of them are professional sorcerers and jugglers

Widely distributed are the sects in which the conception of çakti is specially developed, the so-called *Çâktas*, who are strongly represented in Bengal, but who have also been of importance elsewhere

Also here we often find the influence of Vedânta Çiva is *sat*, *cit*, and *ânanda* as with the Lingâyatas, and the object of men's highest devotion and love, but more important is his *çakti* Çiva and his çakti are the eternal elements, and their combination is viewed under the image of the relation between man and woman. Beside the linga, the *yoni*, the corresponding female symbol, comes in, and the female, as the life-giving and fertile, is the most important one

There are two schools. *the Dakshinâcâra* or Righthand-behaviour, and the *Vâmâcâra*, that of the left hand. The former speaks about the soul's essential connection with God and about

love of and devotion to Him, and its tenets have, through the accentuation of the female principle and especially of the feeling of motherhood, got more fervour, and prayer and concentration are strongly prominent in the cult

In Vâmâcâra the worship of God is more drastic and partly

Çiva in his cosmic dance

orgiastic The aim is to merge into divinity in ecstasy, and, in order to produce ecstasy, all sorts of outward means are used, especially five things beginning with m *mâmsa*, meat, *madya*, intoxicants, *matsya*, fishes, *madhu*, honey, and *maithuna*, sexual intercourse But all such things are forbidden for paçu, the common man, and only allowed to those who have obtained the highest insight and know that it is only a sacrament All

thought of sensual enjoyment must be abandoned, and in the *Çricakra*, the holy circle where Çiva's çakti is worshipped in the shape of a naked woman, nobody should be present whose mind is not pure.

Such rules do throw a milder light on these observances, but often enough the Çâktas have, with joy, taken part in the "sacrament". The Çâkta doctrine has, we may add, exercised its influence also outside of the proper *Çivaism, e.g* in the *bhakti* worship of Krishna and Râdhâ, and also there we have heard about excesses

As compared with Vishnu, Çiva's personality is more ecstatic, and the most beautiful expression of the conception about him is the representation of Çiva Nateça, the god dancing the cosmic dance, where worlds are whirling before his foot in bewildering speed

Unitarian reform movements

In the development of Indian religions down to the 19th century we find many different elements The oldest population has without any doubt exercised its influence in many ways, but the oldest stratum, which we can trace with certainty, is that which is connected with the Indus Civilization. Then came the Aryan invasion, with new ideals and new impulses. But the result of the amalgamation became a religion, which was an apparant unity, and where the Aryan element had the appearance of being prominent, because the Aryans became the leaders of the society

The next element, which we can trace, was Christianity. The tradition refers it, with or without right, to the apostle Thomas, who is said to have suffered a martyr's death in North-Western India. But the religion here seems to have become Indianized at an early date, and when the Portuguese came to the country, they found it difficult to see co-religionists in the Indian Christ-

ians They tried to reform it through violence and inquisition, but had little success in their work for a "purer" faith. For the Indians listen to every religious teaching, but react against violence and compulsion.

More permanent became the influence of Muhammedanism, which still in our own days, has about 90 millions adherents, who have, however, become more or less strongly influenced by the religious views of the non-Muhammedan Indians On the other hand it is possible, as we have seen, that Islam has had a certain importance for the development of Indian monotheism And it was a Muhammedan, the emperor Akbar (1556--1605), who conceived the idea of establishing a common religion for the whole country, a religion which he hoped might become the faith of the whole world But the attempt failed, i a because he had not succeeded in endowing his doctrine with the love and emotional life of the bhakti religion

The British, on principle, refrained from interfering with the religious conceptions of the people They came to India as traders, with the object to accumulate riches, and not as crusaders Nevertheless their arrival was of greater importance than that of the Portuguese That was a consequence of the needs of the administration. It was necessary to appoint Indian assistants, and it was found to be easier and more useful to instruct them in English, than to learn, themselves, enough of the Indian languages of administration More and more Indians thus gradually became acquainted with European thinking and European history

Great importance here had the Bengali brahman *Râm Mohun Roy* (1772--1833) He grew up in a wealthy home, where everything went on in the inherited forms. But to him the many ceremonies seemed to be empty; he reacted against them, quarelled with his father, and left, 15 years old, his home

He went to the frontier of Tibet, and there became acquainted with Buddhism, he studied Hinduism in Benares, and also began

to learn English, and thus came into contact with Christian concept.

The outcome of these studies was, in 1804, a book in Persian *Tuhfat ul Muvahhiddîn* "Gift for Deists", in which he maintained that there is only one God, who is worshipped in all religions.

He also became strongly interested in social questions, and this interest was strengthened when his brother's widow was burnt together with her husband's corpse, in 1811, and he saw how terrible this old custom was. He came to the conviction that reforms were needed, and it was his activity which more than anything else made it possible for Lord Bentinck, without great opposition, to forbid the widow-burning in 1829

Râm Mohun was thus induced to work for a reformation of Hinduism In examining what orthodoxy believed it could find in the traditional literature in support of widow-burning he saw that this tradition was full of later adulterations and additions And he came to the result that a reformation was just as necessary in Hinduism as it had been in Christianity

Through the study of the Upanishads and the Brahmasûtra he found that they fully satisfied the need of reforms, and through translations he tried to lay their proper meaning before his people

In 1815 he founded the Atmiya Sabhâ, for common edification through reading of the sacred texts and singing of hymns. It was the Christian service which was partly imitated In 1820 appeared his Precepts of Jesus, which showed that he had been strongly impressed by the teaching of Jesus and by his personality, a book which has brought many Bengalis over to Christianity, but which the orthodox English missionaries condemned

But one missionary, W Adam, joined Râm Mohun, and together they two formed a Unitarian community, where Adam became the priest.

This further led to the foundation of the *Brâhma Sabhâ*, "the society of those, who seek *brahman*, God", in Calcutta in 1828

It was soon renamed the *Brâhma Samâj*, "the congregation of God-seakers". There was an Indian service every Saturday, with reading of Vedic texts, translations into Bengali, a sermon, and singing of hymns.

What Râm Mohun aimed at was not to preach a new religion, but the eternal Truth, which he believed was the same in all religions, but came most clearly to light in the Indian tradition It was this that should be restored in its purity, his church should be a reformation on Indian ground. He therefore also stuck to inherited custom and usage, only brahmans could act as priests, and the Vedic texts were read in an anteroom, in order not to come into direct contact with low-caste people

His interest in Christianity did not therefore lead him to wish for a Christian India The teaching of Jesus could only be important for India, if it was transformed in the Indian spirit This it was that should be brought out in its purity, and in striving to do so it might be of importance to keep the eyes open for the spiritual value of foreign concepts, because there is, after all, only one Truth

Brâhma Samâj won a not inconsiderable influence with the intellectual élite of Bengal, and retained it even after the founder's death Its leader then became the refined and right-minded Debendranâth Tagore (1817- 1905), a spotless character and unselfish idealist, who, during his long life, gained an ever increasing hold on his compatriots, so that the old honouring designation *Maharshi* "the great sage' was commonly used about him.

Debendra was, in all his attitude, more hinduistic than Râm Mohun, and, moreover, he did not think that India had any need of Christianity. To him the Upanishads were the purest religious source, and through missionaries, sent out from 1844, and through extensive travelling he worked for a purified conception of their teaching, and won friends everywhere within the intellectual élite.

His belief in the infallibility of the Vedas gradually became weaker, and after 1850 the watchword became only to accept what is congruent with a pure deism

He soon found out that a firmer organization was necessary, and already in 1843 he drew up a confession of faith, which, first of all, enjoined the members to abstain from all worship of images and from outward forms of the worship of God, serving Him only in devotion and goodness This confession was then gradually enlarged, so as to contain six items

1) God is a person, with exalted moral qualities;
2) God is never incarnated,
3) God hears and grants our prayers;
4) God should only be worshipped in the spirit The Hindu asceticism, temples, and fixed forms of cult are unnecessary; people of all castes and races can reach God in their worship,
5) Repentance of and abstention from sin are the only ways to forgiveness and salvation,
6) God reveals Himself in nature and directly, no book is binding

This Confession of Faith is incorporated in a handbook, Brâhma Dharma, which contains, besides, passages from the Upanishads and other Hindu books, and is clearly an imitation of the Book of Common Prayer.

In 1857 a man entered the Brâhma Samâj, who was destined to play a great rôle, *Keshab Chandra Sen* (1838—84) He belonged to a Bengali family of medical men, and had had an excellent modern education. Together with Debendra he opened a High-school, *Brahmavidyâlaya*, with lectures in English and Bengali on theistic philosophy and the theology of the Samâj.

While Debendra was a man of the old school, Keshab was a soul on fire, full of eagerness for reforms, and strongly taken in by Christian thoughts. His personality was highly fascinating, and his surroundings doted on him. He laid away the sacrificial cord

of the brahmans, and inveighed against all worship of images and outwardness, and, following European models, he worked for supporting the poor. He founded an English High School, Calcutta College, with English as the chief language. The aim was to throw the door wide open to western ideas, so that they might exercise their full influence on India's religious development.

In 1862 he was himself authorized to officiate at the service, it was forbidden to wear the sacrifical cord, and women were admitted to the worship

The activity was soon extended outside the frontiers of Bengal, and the aim was no more a reformation within the congregation, but a new religion, which should comprise the whole of India.

However, opposition came and was especially directed against the efforts for social reformation, which Keshab more and more pushed into the foreground. In the fundamental religious view there were also contrasts. Keshab spoke about repentance and sin, and strongly stressed the ethical moment, while the conservatives were religious philosophers of the old school

In 1865 it came to a schism, and Keshab's adherents seceded The next year Keshab delivered a great speech, in which he asked his compatriots to listen to the teaching of Jesus, laying strong stress on the fact that Jesus was an Asiatic. He then founded a new society, where Hinduist, Christian, Muhammedan, Zoroastrian, and Confucian writings were used. The ideal was now to evolve a new Unitarian religion of common sense and intellectual emancipation. The old Brâhma Samâj was then generally called the *Adi* (the first) Brâhma Samâj, while the new one get the name *Bhâratavarsha* (Indian) Brâhma Samâj.

A new handbook of devotion was edited, the *Çlokasangraha* ("collection of verses"), with Hinduist, Buddhist, Christian, Muhammedan, and Chinese texts; the divine service was transferred to Sunday, and a new department for missionary activity was established.

The strongly emotional character of Keshab's personality drew him towards bhakti, and much of the Hindu apparatus was introduced, music came to be used during the service, and there were processions with banners, drums, dancing and singing; a whole liturgy was introduced, and there were religious festivals every year.

In 1867 he gave a new great speech about Great Men, in which Keshab maintained that God also revealed Himself in history, and it was evident that here he also thought of himself

His reformatory fervour was increased through a voyage to England in 1869—70, and with body and soul he devoted himself to work for social reforms Among other things he introduced a law about marriage for the Brâhma Samâj, which forbade the marriage of children and superstitious marriage ceremonies

The numerous changes had the effect that his Samâj got a more and more autocratic stamp He began to speak about God's *âdeç*, orders, which were given him by God directly on certain occasions, and which everybody was bound to obey

All this led to opposition, which pained him much. On the other hand, the Indian substratum in his character came strongly to the front His doctrine about Great Men and God's *âdeç* was, after all, based on national concepts, and now he began, in Indian fashion, to speak about renunciation and asceticism, and about all the means of obtaining mystical communion with God

In 1876 the young Mahârâja of Cooch Behâr was to marry, and Keshab's infant daughter was chosen as his bride Though this was in diametrical contrast to his marriage act, he gave his assent, and he also accepted the use of the old Indian ritual, speaking about God's âdeç

Now some of his followers left his Samâj in virtuous indignation, and formed their own congregation, the *Sâdhâran* (common) Brâhma Samâj, in 1878 To the six sentences of the Confession of Faith, they added three new ones· 7) God is men's father and

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all men are brothers; 8) the soul is immortal, and its development is eternal; 9) God rewards goodness and punishes the sinner, but his punishment is not eternal.

Keshab was left with some faithful ones He became more and more pervaded with the belief in his own divine mission "The Lord has said that I shall not have any dogmas or confessions of faith, but a perpetual inspiration from Heaven". He feels himself akin to Jesus, whom he continues to praise with the old fervour. But, in the midst of all this, there came a message from "India's Mother", full of faith in the Mother Goddess

In January 1881 he came forward surrounded by twelve disciples, under a red banner on which was inscribed *Naba Bidhân*, "the new regulation" He solemnly declared that his Samâj, which now was designated the Naba Bidhân Brâhma Samâj brought God's new gospel, for the fulfilment and union of all the religions of the world He himself and his disciples were God's apostles of the new faith Four of them were sent out to investigate the sacred books of Hinduism and Buddhism, the Bible, and the Koran, which all contained the Truth

Orders of monks and of nuns were established, picturesque ceremonies were introduced in the divine service, Hinduist and Christian, baptism and communion were adopted from Christianity and various sacrifices from Hinduism; but all such things were to be symbols and should be interpreted in the spirit of friendship. But in reality they led away from pure deism and towards Indianism

Also pilgrimages were recommended, to places where holy men had been working, and with them Keshab believed that he was in communion. Mysticism more and more took hold of him, and he fancied that he saw Jesus and St John, St Paul, and others before his eyes, and he began to take to mystical dancing, and even to some of the tricks of Indian fakirs.

It was no more the same spirit that filled him. From having been a nationalist theist and reformator he had become a mystic,

a visionary The kernel of his mentality was a strongly developed emotionalism, as we find it with the teachers of bhakti, as Caitanya and others. His view of the image worship of the masses also changed. The images were symbols of the qualities of the Eternal one which the worshipper of images needed for his special wants. Here we had an analysis, the counterpart of the synthesis through which the theist arrived at the belief in the one God of the whole world

Keshab thus gradually got to think that we should not frame a new religion, but consider the various points of view and stages of development Naba Bidhân should, it is true, be the sum total of all religions, but the different shades of opinion should have free play

If God is one, he is present also behind the many names. The Christian doctrine of Trinity was right God is father, son, and spirit, and these three are one But God as father is also mother, and in the ecstasis of the Çâktas it is He who reveals himself in female form To the sentences which the Sâdhâran Brâhma Samâj had formulated Keshab therefore added three· 10) God is three in one father, son, and spirit, and he is, at the same time, the Great Mother and the Father of all, 11) the Brâhma religion is not a new faith, but the kernel of all religions. It is God's latest ordination, and its missionaries are God's chosen apostles; 12) God we learn to know in nature and through direct intuition, but He also reveals Himself in inspirated men, and he makes his will known through âdeç, commands to his servants.

Keshab was not an organizator, but a rich and strongly impulsive personality who magnetized his surroundings But at his death the leading force had disappeared, and since then Naba Bidhân has rather waned. Keshab Chandra will, nevertheless, remain one of the most interesting figures in the religious development in India of the 19th century. He led Brâhma Samâj, whose leaders were often inclined to theorization and dogmatizing,

on to becoming a living faith of the heart, with the whole fervour of the bhakti religion And just because his personality is so prominent, he is the best example to study in order to see how natural is the development to an Indian from being taken in by foreign thoughts and ideals to becoming, finally, anchored in the national fundamental Indian view For that it was what happened to Keshab, and what we always find to be the case, in many ways, in India

On the other hand, it would be inconceivable if the many changes and curious ideas he worked with had not led to a strong reaction also outside the Brahma society

Arya Samāj and the Mahāsabhā

It is evident that European prototypes have contributed to bring about the Brāhma Samaj s interest in reforms, and also in the social work in which some of its leaders were interested, we can see that the same was the case. The idea of reform was maintained in the ensuing years, often kept up by men who, in many ways, had adopted European views But it could also take another direction, towards a reformation backwards, with the aim to clear out everything foreign and all accretions, in order to re-establish the Vedic religion and civilization in its purity, in the conviction that it fully revealed eternal truth, and that all imperfection was due to later corruptions Such was the case with the *Arya Samāj*, "the Society of Aryans", which was founded in 1875 and had its chief seat in Panjab, the old centre of Aryan culture

Its founder, Mul Sankar (1824 83) was born in a brahman family of bankers in Kāthiāvār. He is better known under the name, he adopted when he renounced the world and became a Sannyāsin, *Dayānand Sarasvati*

He ceased early to believe in image-worship, and began to ponder over the meaning of life. He left his home and sought

instruction with Vedântists, and later with a yogin, *Svâmî Virajânand*, who had turned away from more modern forms of Hinduism and become absorbed in the Vedas. By him he was requested to re-establish the old Vedic religion, and with that he set out in 1863

He soon became famous for his learning, but gave offence by his attacks on the worship of images, which he found had no foundation in the Vedas He only became more successful when he made an appeal to the national youth and founded the Ârya Samâj in 1875

In 1877 he transferred his activity to Panjâb, and there he found eager disciples among the young generation, who were trained in European knowledge, but had not given themselves up to it. It was, we may remember, just in Panjâb that the Indians had made the last vigorous stand in order to stop the wave of British conquest

Ârya Samâj got a strong national stamp from the very beginning, and it has been an important factor in the nationalist movement and much contributed to its vigorous growth While Brâhma Samâj only counted about 5000 adherents in 1941, the number of Âryas was about a quarter of a million In the case of both we must, further, remember that their influence reaches far beyond the circle of the members.

For a time Dayânand was in contact with theosophy, but it ended in a complete rupture in 1881 More important was his connection with Debendranâth Tagore and Keshab Chandra, and he also had discussions with Christian missionaries But he stuck firmly to the national life, and his Samâj partly got an aggressiv character, there being, especially, sharp encounters with the Muhammedans and Christians as well

It was not only in regard to religion that India should be recreated, but also socially. The Samâj has therefore also been active for the development of schools and popular instruction, as it has worked

energetically for the poor and oppressed and has thus acted as a strong counterpoise to the Christian mission in India.

In its confession of faith the Arya Samāj inculcates God's omnipotence and goodness, and that He alone should be worshipped. One should strive to be good and truthful, show love and justice to all, and do good towards all, in the conviction that one's own happiness is insolubly bound up with that of others, and one should work for the improvement of men's spiritual, physical, and social conditions.

But the chief tenet is that the Vedas are the source of true wisdom, and that it is the highest duty of every Arya to read them, to hear them being read, and to promulgate their teaching to others The word Veda means "knowledge", and that is to say *all* knowledge Even the most modern discoveries are to be found there, we must only interpret them in the proper way The science of Europe is only a realization of what the seers of the East, through God's grace, have beheld in the dawn of time As the peoples of the West had received the faculty to act, those of the East had got the divine gift of vision All the world's knowledge and all its religions can therefore be derived from the Vedas, and Nature's book, in which God has also revealed Himself, agrees with them

We have only to get away from all later additions and corruptions, then the true Vedic teaching might become a gospel for the whole world.

Dayânand therefore began to interpret the four Vedas, and his interpretation of them has become what the Aryas must accept The methods are often rather forced, but the fundamental notion itself has contributed mightily to strengthen the Indians' reliance in themselves and their calling in the world, and if the people becomes filled with that belief, the result may become an upright virile religiosity, which may become an important factor in the development of religion.

Sâmkhya and Yoga, combined with Vedânta, have left their

mpress on Dayânand's concepts; and he has also adopted he theory of karman and transmigration, and of man's ability o reach, through his own work, the saving insight

He fought against polytheism and also against the caste-system, and in this way was much contradicted. On the other hand, he was criticized by the protagonists of progress in allowing *niyoga*, i e the custom to authorize a childless woman to raise progeny for her deceased husband with another man Dayânand's view was here the old one about the eternal continuity of the family, which made it necessary to take care, through a son, that the acts of the departed ones accrued to the benefit of their kin

Dayânand was an able organizator His society got its local lodges, its provincial lodges, beside the common Samâj for the whole of India, and everybody could be admitted, the lower castes, however, only after certain lustrations The divine service was performed before a Vedic fire-altar, it began with carrying about a censer, and then followed recitations of Vedic hymns, prayers, interpretations from Dayânand's writings, singing of hymns, reading, and, finally, the Confession of Faith There are no official priests, but every qualified Arya may officiate

After Dayânand's death a schism has gradually arisen between the conservative Mahâtma school and a more modern one The former is strictly vegetarian, and sticks to the ancient methods of instruction, where the pupils were supervised by their teachers both during and outside the lessons They have their college at Hardvâr, where the Ganges emerges from the hills, and all who have learnt to know it, praise it highly. The instruction is given in Indian language, and the ancient tradition is eagerly studied. Modern knowledge is, however, not neglected, and everything is done in order to make the young ones fit to take their share in the life of the nation, as modern men, but above all as Aryan Indians.

The modern school has its Anglo-Vedic College in Lahore,

and the instruction is also given in English However the spirit is the same, and, *e g*, in medical lore it is necessary first to introduce the results of modern progress into the Vedas by means of interpretation, and then to make practical use of them.

From both institutes have gone out, one class after another, thoroughly healthy and sound young Indians, with their eyes open for all the manifold needs of life, and filled with faith in India's ability to maintain her place in the world

The views of the Samâj could, in the nature of things, not be accepted by the Muhammedans. They had not the feeling of being impure, and they could not forget that they had once been the rulers of India The Indian National Congress has raised an ever strengthening claim to represent the whole of India, also the Muhammedan strata, which represent about a quarter of the whole population Their union, the Muslim League, founded in 1905, has reacted strongly against the claim of the Congress. Politics were introduced into the relationship, and the position of both Muhammedans and other minorities, has caused ever increasing difficulties. The British government felt that it was its duty to protect them, and, when the Indians could not themselves come to an agreement, it ruled that they should have an appropriate representation in the councils and institutions which were to rule the new India The Congress made some concessions, but these did not remove the contrasts

On the other hand, there were some Hindus who held that they went too far, and in 1925 their society, the Indian *Mahâsabhâ*, "the great Lodge", broke off the collaboration with the Congress

The Muslim League, under its leader *Muhammed Ali Jinnah* (born 1876) would not join a united India such as the Congress claimed, but divide the country into a *Hindustân*, the land of the Hindus, and a ***Pâkistân***, the land of Purity, which was to comprise those districts where there is a Muhammedan majority Against this the Mahâsabhâ, especially, protested, the Muhammedans must acknowledge that they are a minority. And there

must not be a vivisection of India, there must be *one* Hindu rāj, Hindu realm, based on the right of the majority to rule the whole country

Also the sixty millions of casteless or outcaste Indians, under their leader *Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar* (born 1893), raised their claims, and other minorities joined them

The consequences have become observable also in the field of religion As the modern efforts to create a more or less independent India have led, *first to an accentuation of the difference* between Indians and Europeans, and afterwards of that between the different Indian strata, thus the guarantees of the rights of the minorities have led to an intensifying of the religious differences

Rāmakrishna and his school

It is the duties and not the rights of man which Indian thinkers and teachers have placed in the foreground The old Sanskrit language has no word which corresponds to our 'right, justification', for *adhikāra* is more properly a right derived from appointment to a position The catchwords have been 'duty' and 'law' Only he, who fulfils his duty, can hope for happiness But this hope might be realized in a distant future and frequently not during a single existence

Arya Samaj, and still more Indian nationalism and the modern Indian interest in reforms, are therefore, in many ways, new features, which may become important for the development in future, also for the religions The old ideal was, for the individuals, to free themselves from everything that binds them to the life on earth, and only to strive to develop what is eternal and true, while the new one aimed at other goals as well So far as religion is concerned, it was not only to make the individual ripe for eternity, but also to make the religious ideals useful in life, and to bring about brighter conditions for human beings

An important step in this direction must be to loosen the tight fetters of the caste system. Something has been done for that purpose, but as long as there are millions of Indians whose social status is so low that it is forbidden, or even sin, for high-caste people to touch them, religion can for them, at the utmost, be a hope for a better position after death, and not in this life.

Râmakrishna

For high caste people, on the other hand, it will, in the long run, when the idea of national unity becomes stronger and stronger, become impossible to acquiesce in the fact that a great part of their compatriots leads a life which is hardly worthy of human beings.

Though caste has still retained much of its old importance, it has, necessarily, to a certain extent, been weakened by the influence

of religious teachers who have maintained that it (the caste) has no significance for the development of the religious life This was the standpoint of Jainism and Buddhism and with many of the preachers of the bhakti religion.

Working in the same direction is a religious movement in modern India which we can trace back to the brahman *Gadâdhar Chatterji* (1834—1886), a devout visionary who has become known also outside India's frontiers under the name he got when he renounced the world and became a Sannyâsin, *Râmakrishna*

When child he reacted against school and education, which he thought only aimed at obtaining social standing and providing for a living, and he became a servant in a Kâli-temple outside Calcutta His thoughts here were only occupied with this single question "Is there an almighty deity behind the image, and can I get to behold it?" He sang and prayed, and time after time he had fainting fits and remained lying thus for hours He had visions and revelations, but he did not succeed in beholding Kâli

He neglected his duties in the temple through this, and at last he left it and lived for some time in the forests. There he met a nun, who took care of his schooling and instructed him in Çivaite literature and in Yoga Until his death he honoured her as Wisdom itself in human shape

Afterwards he came under the tuition of a Sannyâsin of the monistic Vedânta school, and became filled with the belief in the one brahman, beside which everything was an illusion without value and reality.

By him he was initiated as a Sannyâsin, and gradually his fame as a saint increased, and the honorific designation *Paramahansa*, "the highest swan" became used about him

Then he came into contact with the bhakti religion, and became passionately impressed by it And at last he obtained what he was longing for He saw Krishna himself before his eyes.

He had married when young, but his wife, who was sent to him, did not make any marital claims, but became his faithful

collaborator in his seeking He said to her that, in his eyes, Kâli was incorporated in every woman, and otherwise he could not look on any of them.

In this his conception of women he did not acknowledge any difference of caste, and this influenced his view about caste on the whole To him it did not signify anything at all, and high caste might, in his opinion, straight away become a hindrance, in making man self-conceited and leading his thoughts away from the divine, the only reality

He therefore systematically tried to eradicate his own caste-feeling, and undertook the tasks of the most despised castes In pure Vedântic spirit he held that the consciousness of an I must be eradicated, and one of his means was to dress, and behave, and try to think as a woman It was the old longing for brahman that beset him

He felt that this longing of his was perhaps the same in all religions. He took a Muhammedan instructor, and he had the same experience as with the bhaktas, and he took a Christian teacher and lived in strict conformance with Christian tenets, and he thought he had a vision of Jesus himself

In this way he gradually came to the conclusion that all religions are true and, in the end, lead the sincere seeker of truth into immediate communion with divinity

He got in touch with Dayânand and Keshab Chandra, and both were strongly impressed by him He won friends and pupils among all classes, even such as had had a modern university education, and he had a rare faculty to attract everybody. He was not learned, but filled with a fervour which acted irresistibly on everybody

The Vedânta doctrine about the oneness of the eternal had become decisive for him, and whether God is a person or not was quite unimportant to him; one person may see Him in one way, another in another way; he himself thought he had seen God under many forms. God, the spirit, is one, but He has many

names and many forms Even in a statue or in an image He is really present, and when the adorer in sincerity prostrates himself before Him, God knows that He is the object of the adoration, and He reveals Himself in the image Even in the worship of images man obtains what is the most important to cease looking on himself as anything but the servant of God

The outcome of Râmakrishna's teaching was therefore an exhortation to all, not to abandon their own religion, but to devote themselves sincerely to it and its injunctions, then it will lead to society with God of whatever kind it is

For the religious life in modern India Ramakrishna's preaching has had great importance It has contributed to increase the self-reliance and to strengthen the resisting power of Hinduism and the national religious forms, while it has become a hindrance to the Christian mission, which aims at conversion, and not at fidelity to inherited conceptions

Ramakrishna's teaching has also been promulgated in America and Europe, and has there won many adherents, who have not, however, listened to his exhortation to follow the commands of their own religion in sincere seeking for truth, but have instead, attempted to look on life and existence through Indian spectacles At the parliament of religions in Chicago, in 1893, the best known pupil of Ramakrishna *Svâmi Vivekânanda* (1862– 1912) spoke and made a *furore* through his eloquent pleading

Vivekânanda, whose original name was Narendra Nath Dutt, had been educated in modern schools, but had become fascinated by Ramakrishna's preaching His fundamental view was that of the Vedanta but he formulated it in a way adapted to modern life The soul, the individual, is identical with brahman, with God, but this oneness may be realized not only through knowledge and intuition, but also in the practical life and its activities

Through *Râjayoga*, the various devices for fixing the attention and for concentration, we may obtain the inspired insight, which, in its essence, is identical with reason Through *Karmayoga*, i e

devoting all our work to the fulfilment of the manifold exigences of life without thinking of any selfish aim, for the sake of the work itself, we make our daily life an uninterrupted worship of God, and remain untouched by life's conditions, just as the lotus remains pure in the mud. And in *Bhaktiyoga*, the loving devotion to God, we sacrifice everything in honour of Him, be it flowers, incense and offerings, or prayers and hymns, or the heart's innermost thoughts.

Therefore all religions melt together, and Vivekanand denies straight away the existence of polytheism in India. One may stand, he says, listening, in any Indian temple, and one will hear how all God's qualities, even omnipresence, become attributed even to an image. There is no essential difference between the religions. In all of them one may obtain what is the highest Yoga, the connection, the communion between God and man, between the higher and the lower I.

Vivekânand was a highly gifted and eloquent propagator, who was listened to and valued wherever he came. He also understood the importance of organization, and he is the real founder of the so-called Râmakrishna mission, with its school, the *Advaita Açrama*, in the Almora district. From it disciples and missionaries have gone out, who have been of importance for India's spiritual development, and there are signs which seem to show that also this mission, like the Arya Samâj, has begun to play a rôle in the nationalist movement. And we cannot wonder.

The Râmakrishna mission has displayed a great activity in order to diminish old prejudices and indifference, especially towards the poor and oppressed. In recognizing their beliefs and worship as equivalent means for obtaining association with God, he has knit a tie between the lowest forms of Hinduism and the highest Vedânta teaching, which only the few can grasp. The religious thought has become something of a common national notion within Hinduism, and, with a certain right, it has been

said about Vivekânand that he was a nationalist before nationalism pervaded the minds.

Beside Vivekânand, the movement has had other representatives in India One of them, the brahman *Râmatirtha*, retired from his position as professor of mathematics, in order to preach the new gospel. The work he and other wandering preachers have performed in the India of to-day, has been very important. These men are full of enthusiasm, and though they do not try to be puritan reformators, their sympathizing and free views have had a great effect on the masses While the Brâhma Samâj has been an essentially aristocratic movement, the Râmakrishna mission has possibilities of becoming a means of spiritual emancipation for the whole people

In Vivekânand's teaching we can distinctly trace a strong influence exercised by Vedânta and Yoga, combined by bhakti. A similar foundation we also find with others of India's leading thinkers in modern times It is, *e g*, essentially the Vedânta standpoint which meets us in the poet *Rabindranâth Tagore* (1861 - -1941), the son of Debendranâth, whose sublime poems have made him known and admired, and beloved, not only in India, but also in Europe and America

Rabindra looked on life and the world as an endless harmony, borne by eternal beauty and joy The infinite, brahman, God, is to be found in everything, and may be worshipped everywhere. He cannot, consequently, be devoid of contents truth, reality, which is the same as what shall never end. Therefore also our longings, our strivings, our wishes are without measure and limit, and are being directed towards what is greater than we ourselves. The latent longing of the soul is to become one with brahman to obtain *Nirvâna*, i e. emancipation from everything that is not genuine, to become really free And it wins its freedom through acts, always on and on, the joy in the work leading beyond every limitation In it we are not true, genuine; this we only become in brahman As the rivulet, in consequence of the

law of its nature, following its *dharma*, flows downwards and finds rest in the Ocean, the soul is irresistibly driven to brahman As soon as we se that this is the aim, every act, every step on the road, becomes full of meaning, a "becoming" which ends in an eternal being.

Rabindranath Tagore

Rabindra has not only worked through his songs and books, for many years he had a school in Çântiniketan in the Bolpur district, where the boys got an instruction which did not aim at examinations or appointments, but at educating them into harmonic, useful human beings. In 1921 he also founded a High School there, the Viçvabharati, were pupils were admitted from the whole world, and where also the teachers were selected from different nations. Practical and theoretical problems should be taught, but the chief aim was to study the human soul in its

realization of the different aspects of truth The High School should be a meeting-place of the cultures of the East and the West But though Rabindranâth eagerly wished to unite the thinkers of the East and the West in common work for the highest ideals, it is perhaps rather the difference between the

Gandhi

conceptions of life in the East and in the West which most strongly characterized his personality

In spite of all assertions to the contrary, the Indians have not become a real nation, where all look upon each other as brethren in the work for the common motherland To the Aryan Indians the Vedic tradition was the sole true source of truth, and the Aryans as a matter of course were the leaders of the country. Even in ours days there have been attempts at establishing a real unity, as when the Muhammedans in 1916 joined the Hindus

in asking for an independent India On that occasion *Mohandâs Karamchand Gândhi* (1869—1948) could work together with the Muhammedan *Aga Khân* (born 1877), and the Muhammedans did not make any protest when Gândhi started his campaign of disobedience, and went to the seashore in order to break the government's salt-monopoly, jubilantly applauded by the poetress *Sarojini Naidû* (1879—1949) But we have already seen that the feeling of unity did not last long.

The same was the case with regard to religion The feeling of unity was strong with the Aryan Indians And above all it was the strongest feature in the bhakti-religion This last one had, as we have seen, found adherents even among the Greeks in India; it might have pervaded the Christian minority, and Kabir's example shows that it might also have found proselytes among Muhammedans. But a common religion of bhakti would have to include also Indians with modern views, and have to be heightened through their influence. It could not, as Gândhi wished, have led to a return to the primitive conception of primeval times And as long as he remains the object of an unexampled bhakti, which comes near to real worship, he will, even after his death, remain an essential hindrance to a common Indian religion, with sects and shadings, no doubt, as we find it to be the case even in a small European country, but with lofty ideals which all acknowledge.

Ekam sad viprâ bahudhâ vadanti (Rigveda I, 164, 46)

The true which is in single wise
the scalds relate in varied guise

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My late friend, professor Sten Konow, was of opinion that our contribution to the work "*Illustreret Religionshistorie*", ed by Johs Pedersen, Copenhagen 1948, could be useful — with some adaptation — as a separate booklet in a world language He therefore translated the book into English. For good help during the revision of this translation I am indebted to major Erik Seidenfaden from Bangkok

Copenhagen 1949

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